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Brundage

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(54) **BLANKS AND METHODS FOR FORMING CONTAINERS HAVING STACKING PLATFORMS**

(71) Applicant: **WestRock Shared Services, LLC**, Norcross, GA (US)

(72) Inventor: **David Joe Brundage**, Salinas, CA (US)

(73) Assignee: **WestRock Shared Services, LLC**, Norcross, GA (US)

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B31B 3/26	(2006.01)
B65D 5/10	(2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC ***B31B 3/26*** (2013.01); ***B65D 5/001*** (2013.01); ***B65D 5/106*** (2013.01)

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CPC B65D 5/003; B31B 3/26
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See application file for complete search history.

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Primary Examiner — Christopher Demeree
(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — WestRock IP Legal

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A blank of sheet material for forming a container includes a plurality of side panels and a glue panel coupled together in series along a plurality of generally parallel fold lines. At least one of the generally parallel fold lines has an increased stiffness. The blank also includes a plurality of bottom panels. At least one of the bottom panels includes at least one bottom corner portion that extends adjacent to and beneath a free bottom edge of a corresponding one of the corner panels and the glue panel. The blank further includes a plurality of top panels. At least one of the top panels includes at least one top corner portion that extends adjacent to and above a free top edge of a corresponding one of the corner panels and the glue panel.

28 Claims, 13 Drawing Sheets

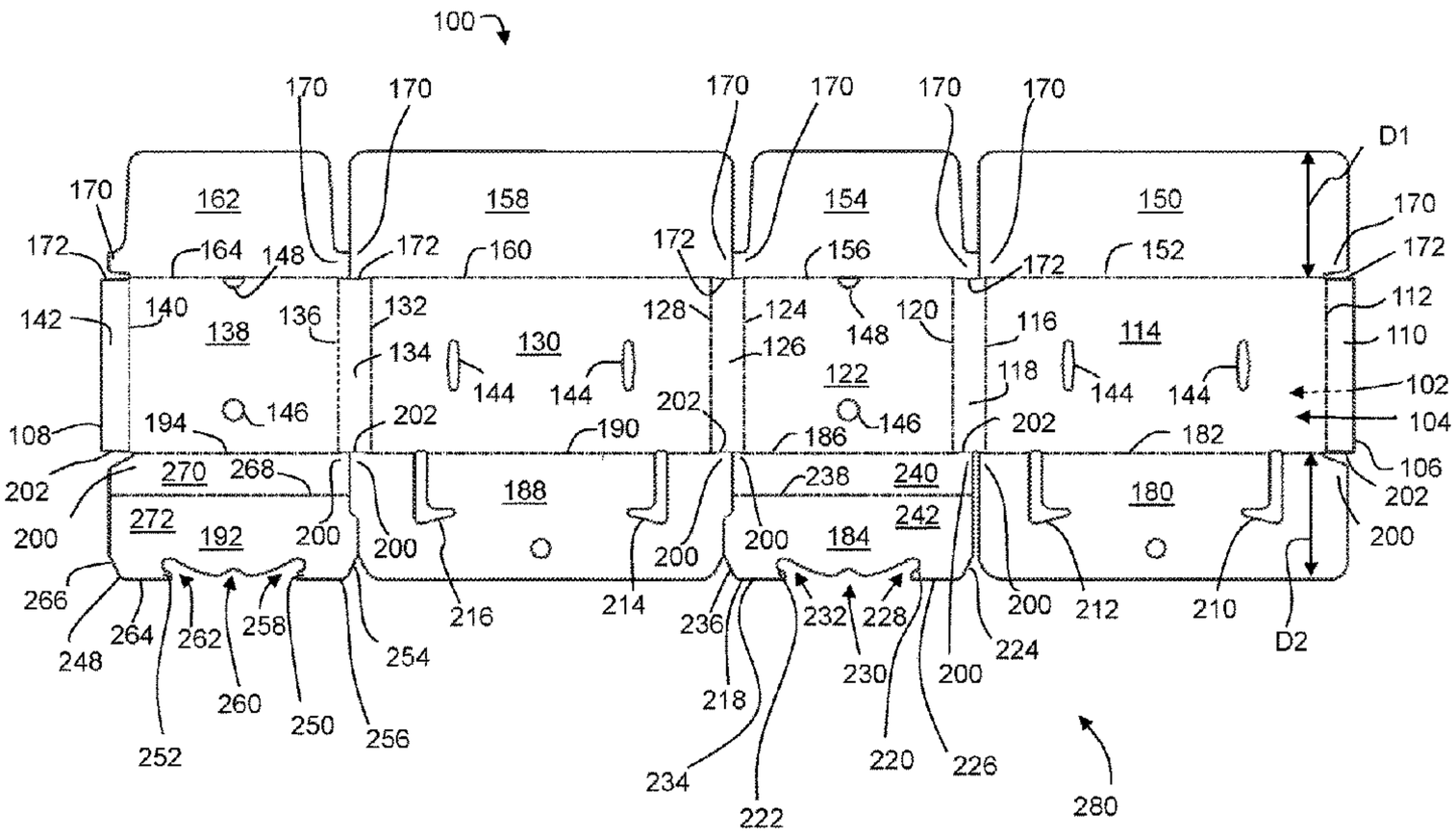

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FIG. 1

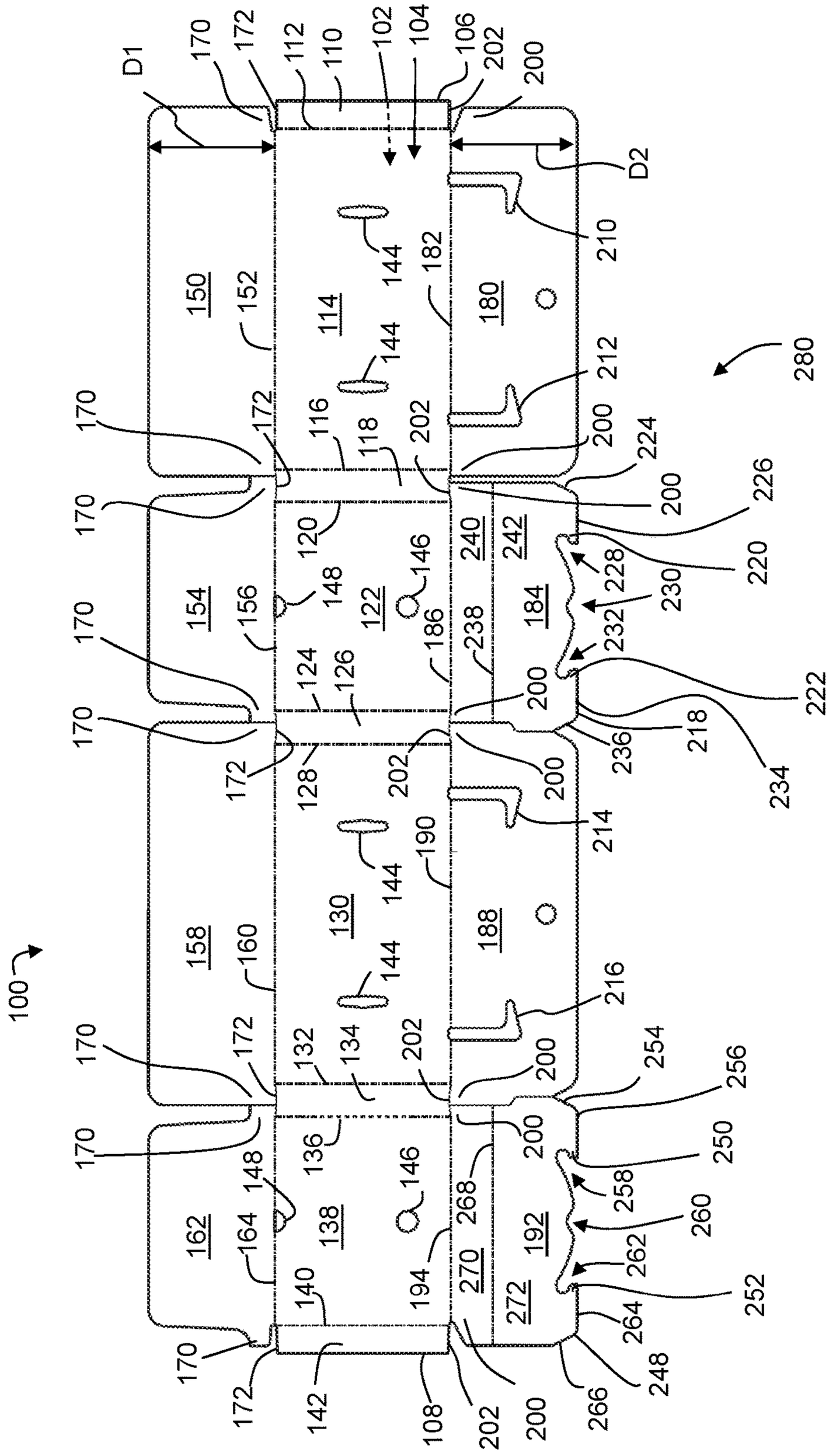
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FIG. 2

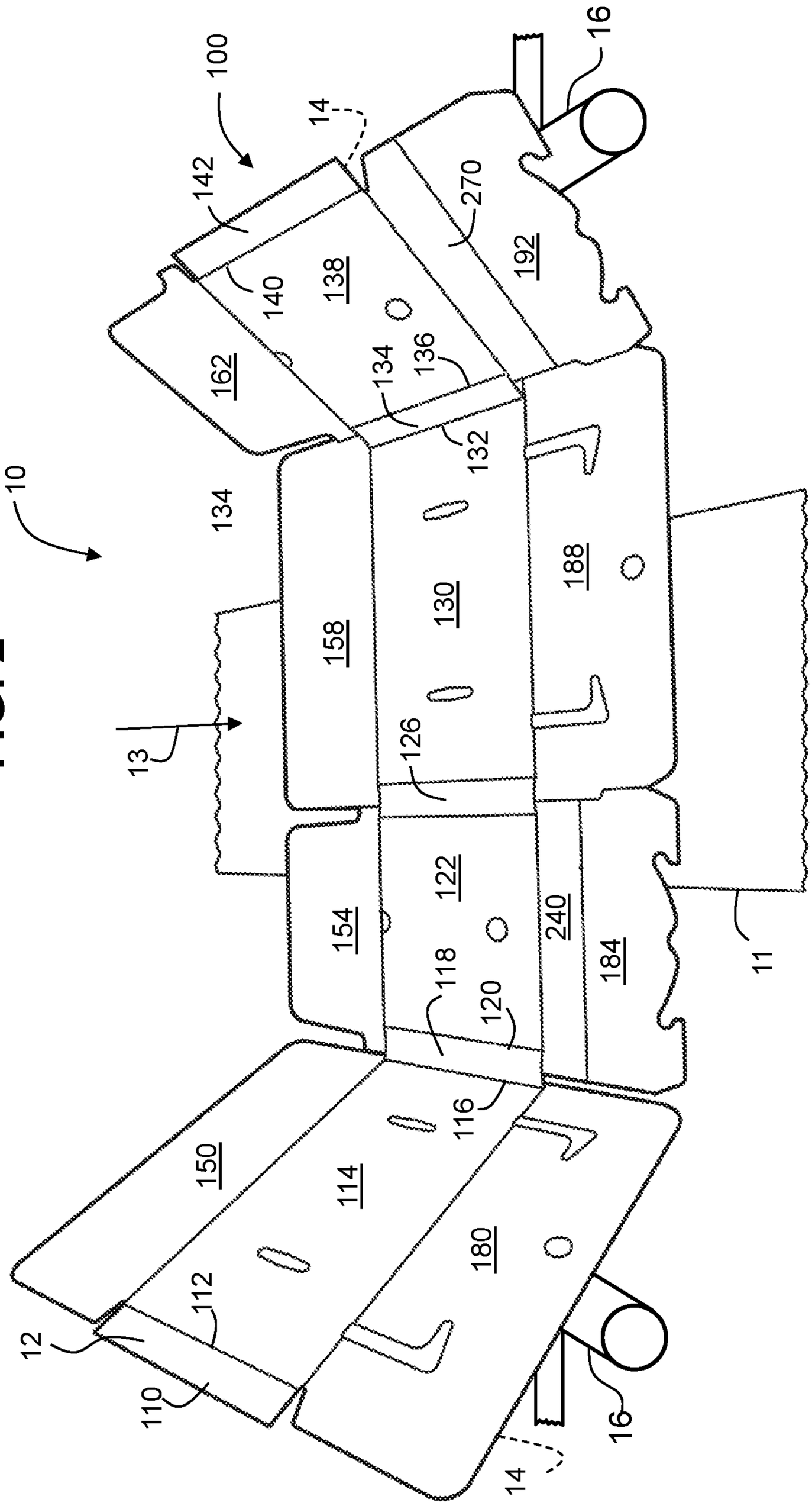
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FIG. 3

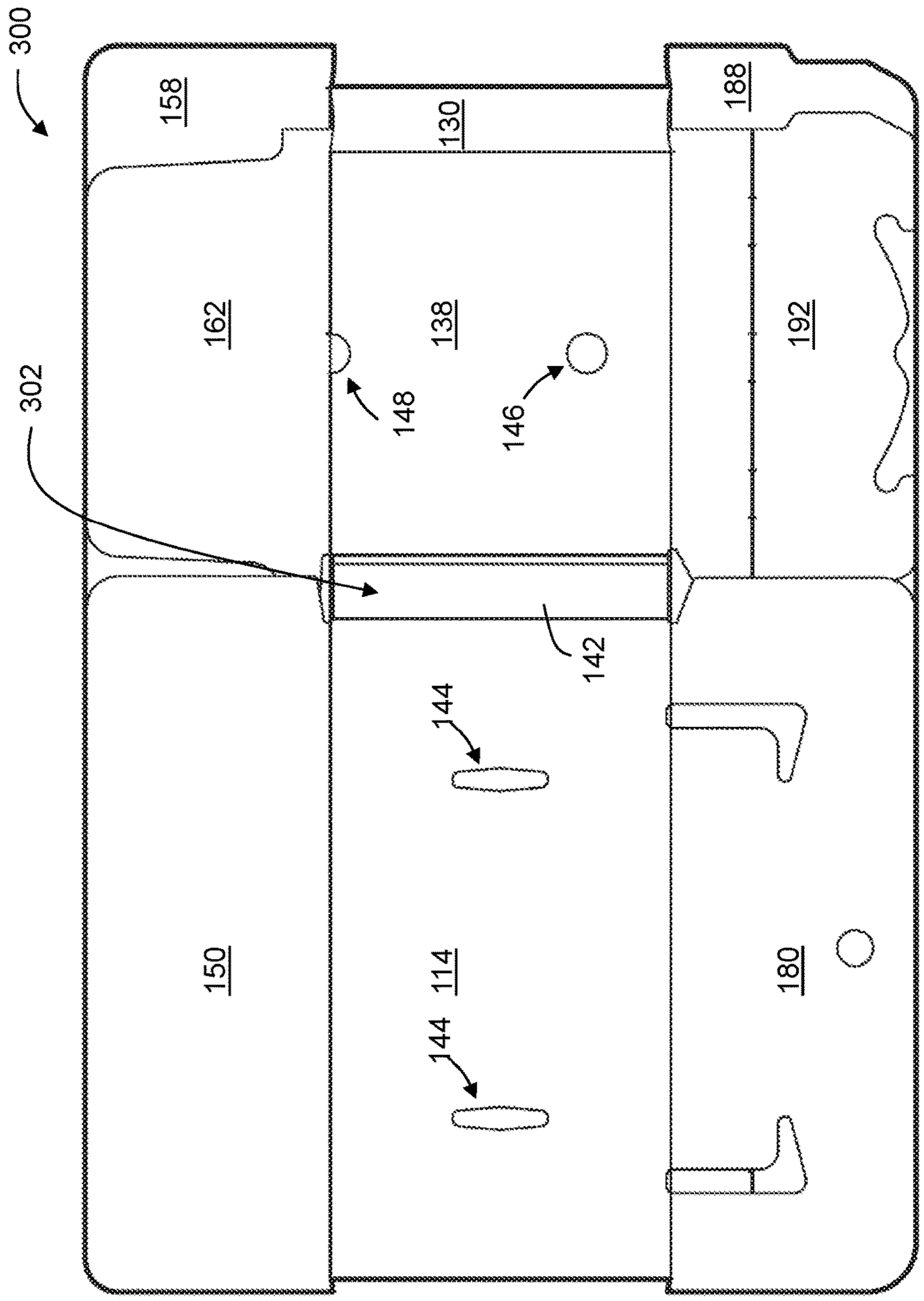
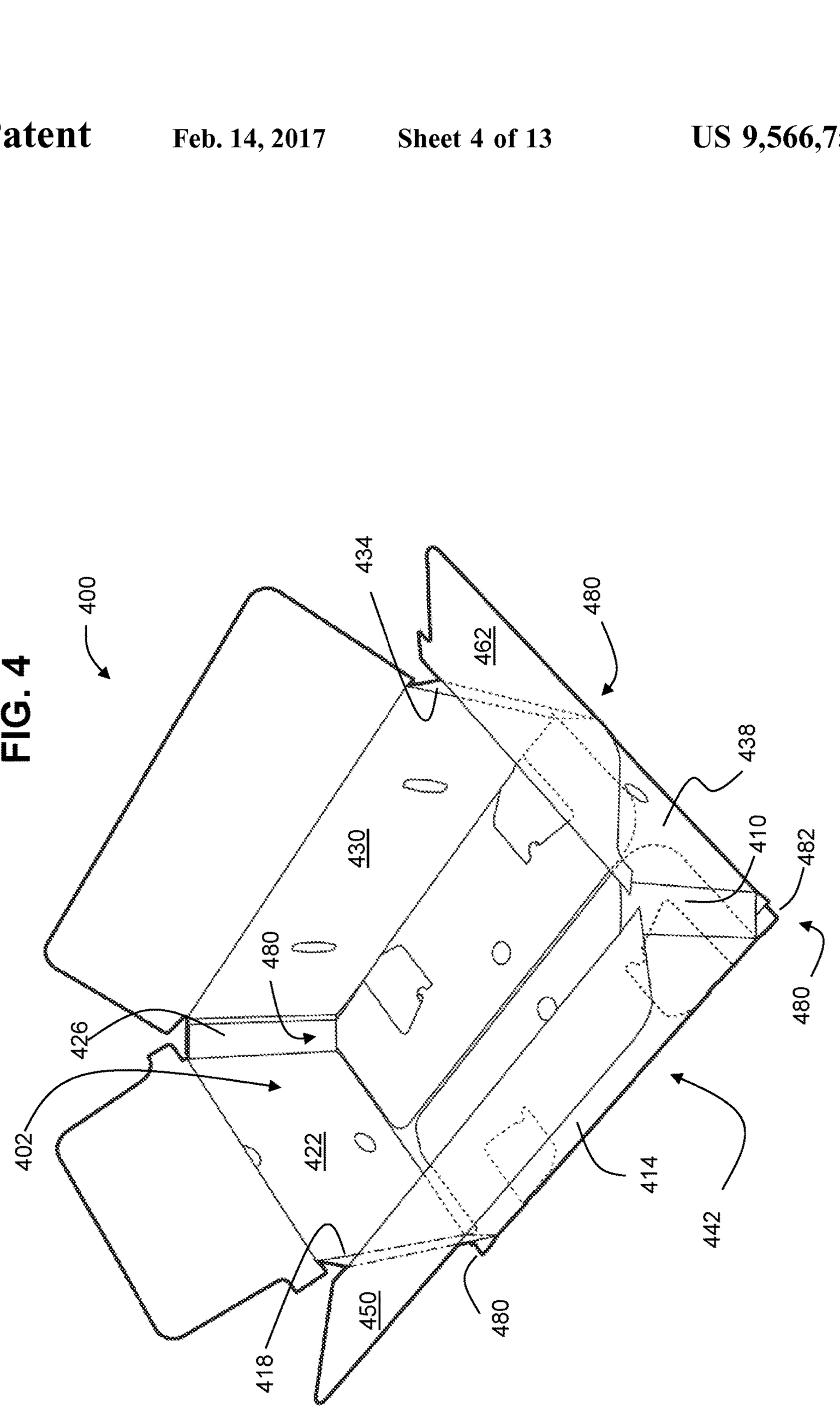


FIG. 4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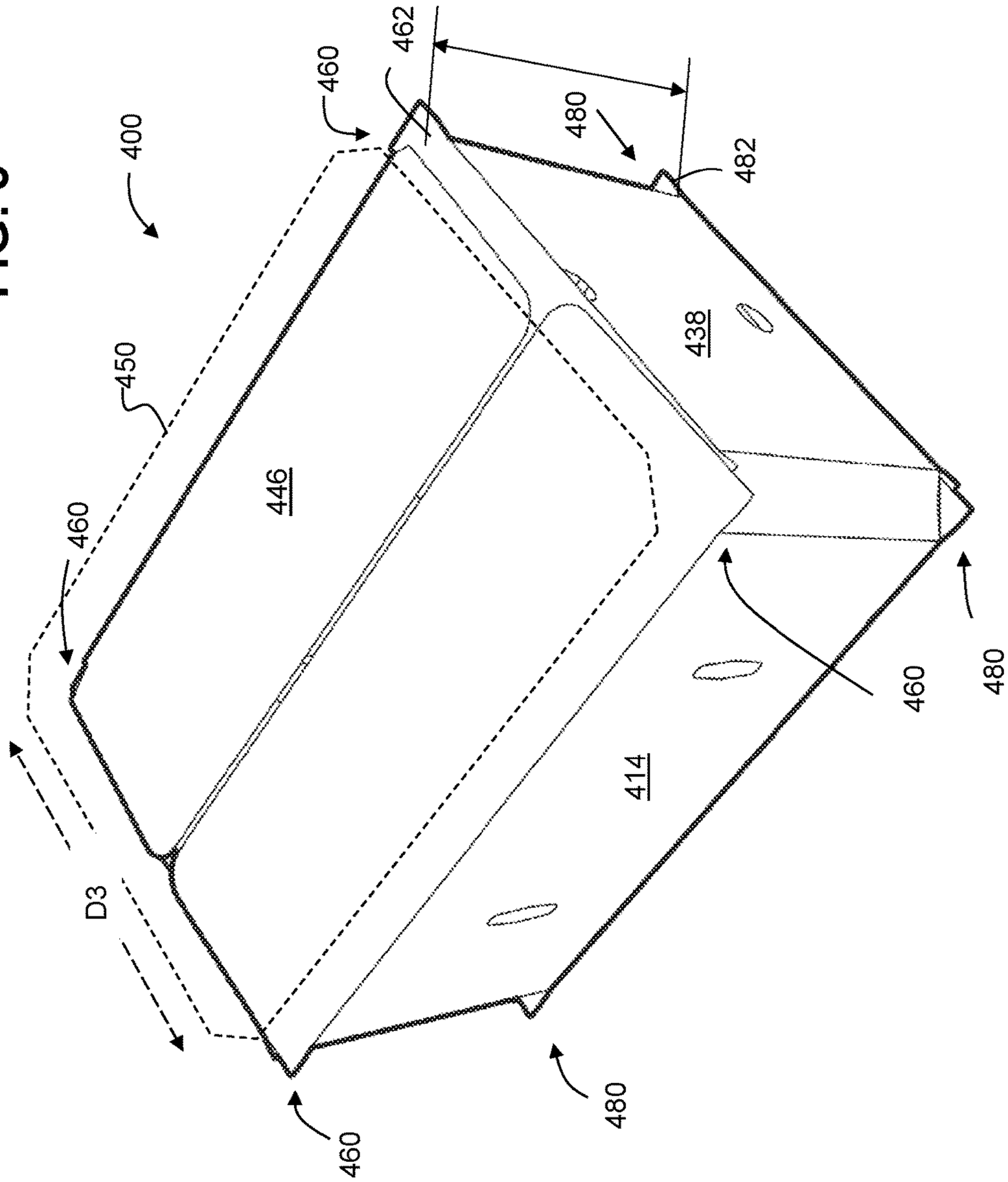

FIG. 6

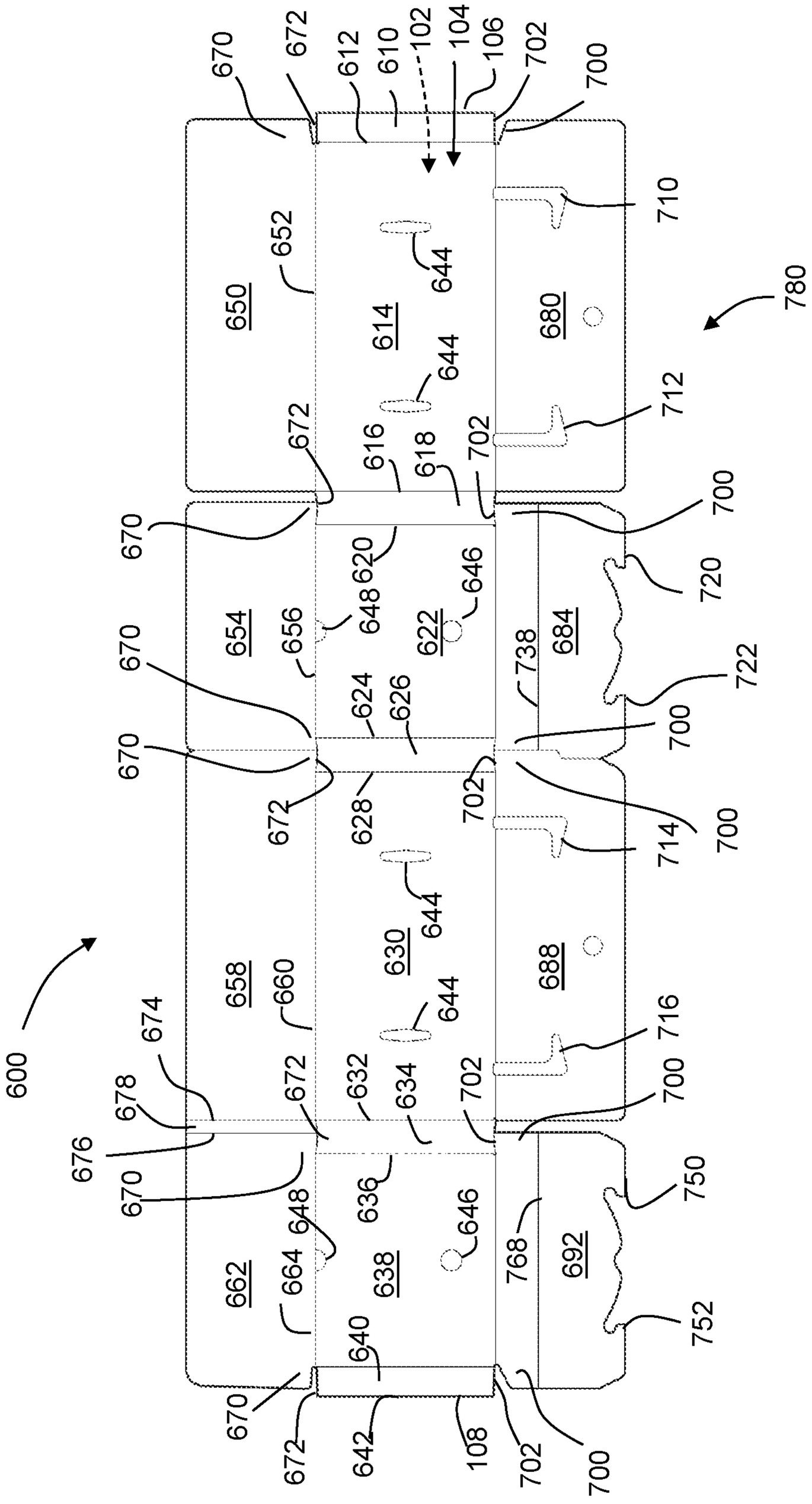
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FIG. 7

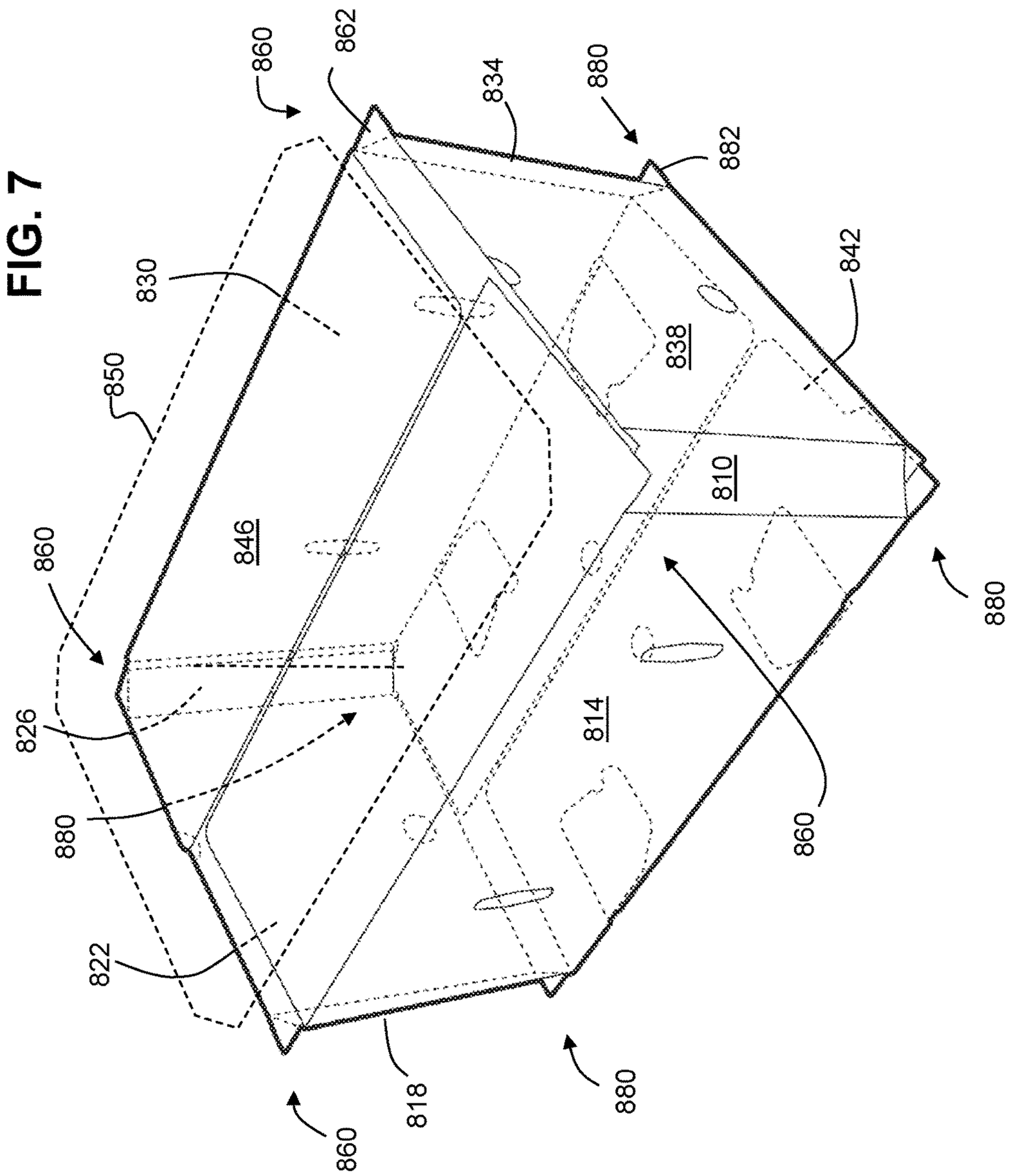
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FIG. 8

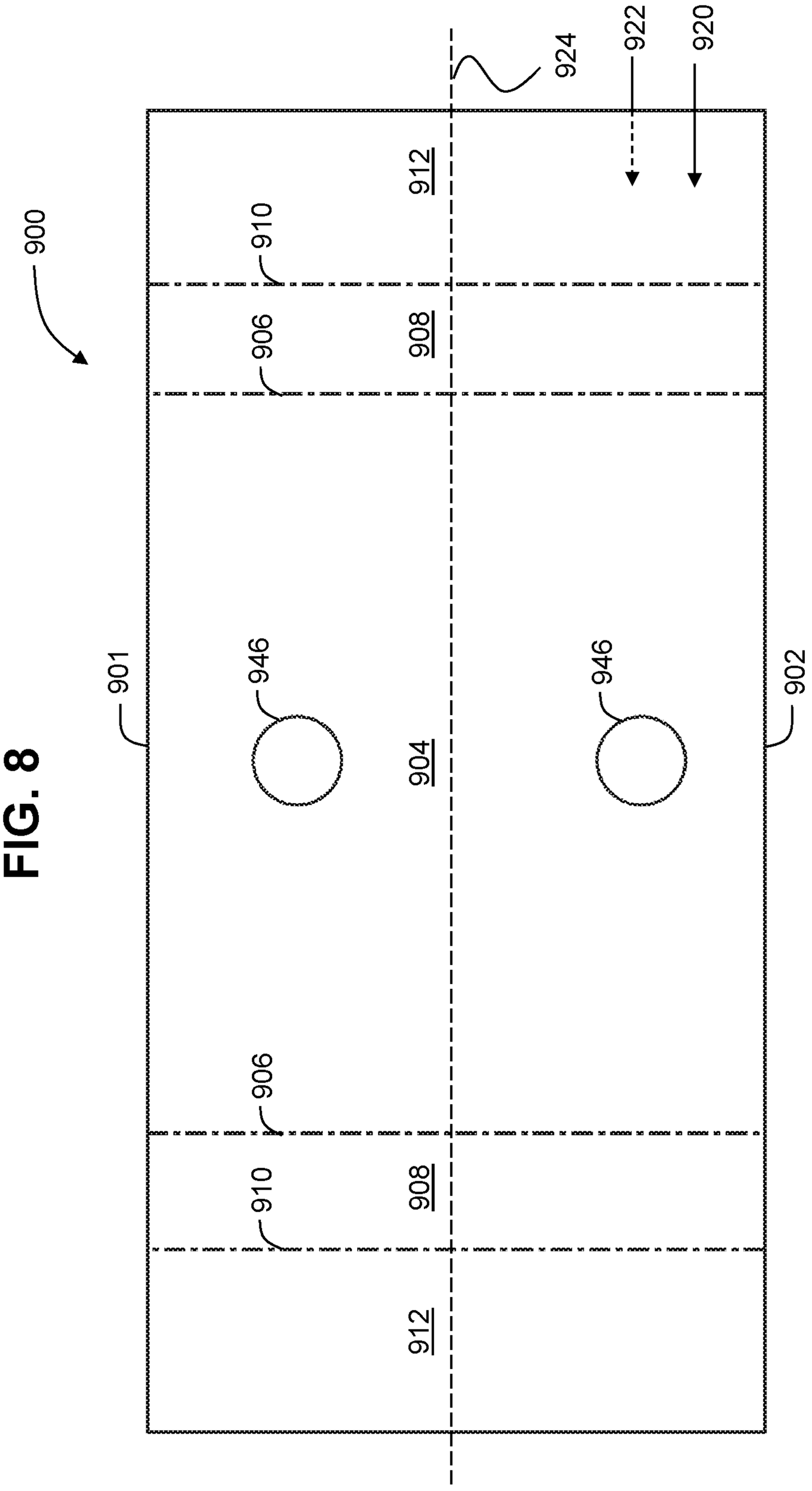
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FIG. 9

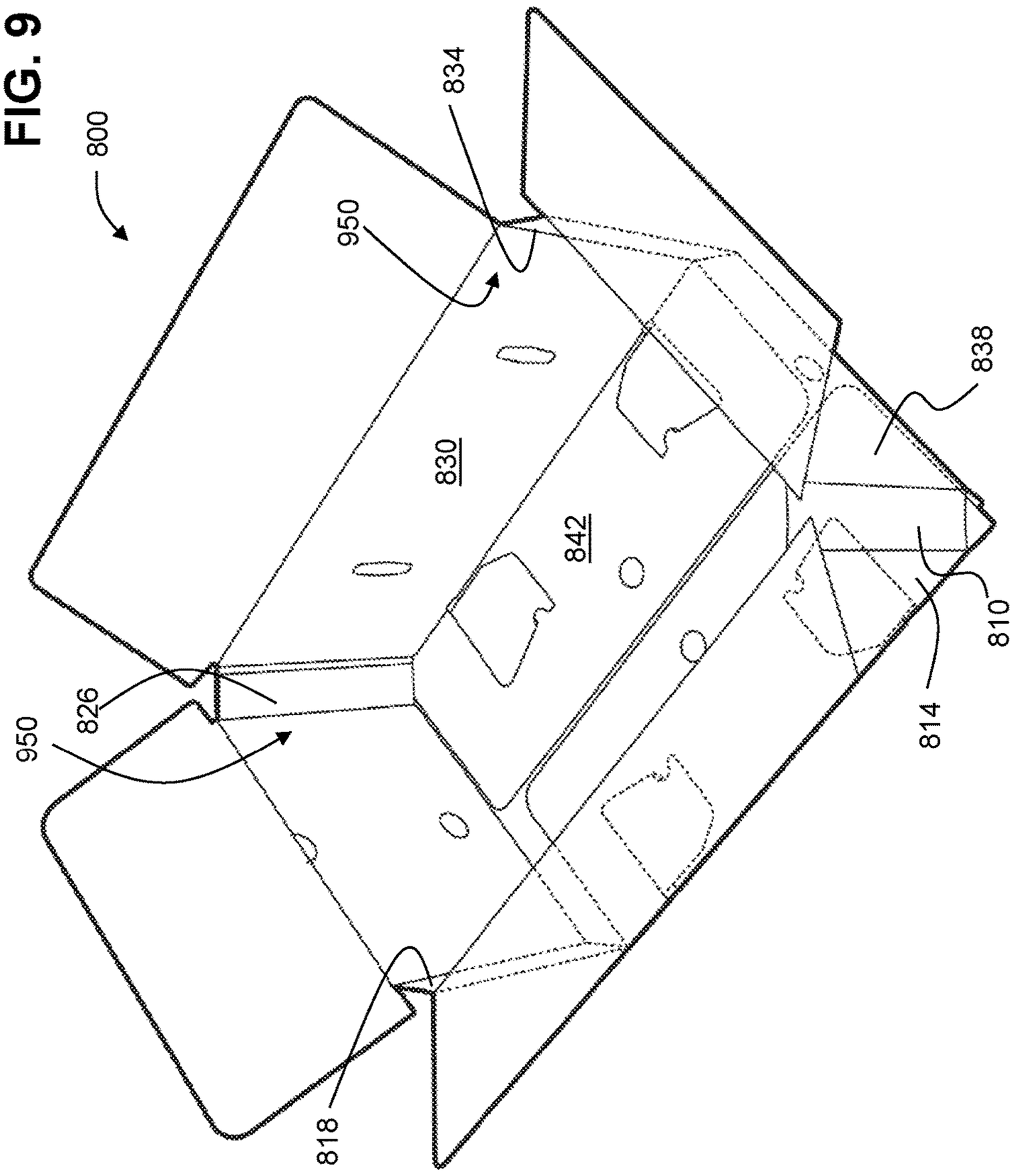

FIG. 10

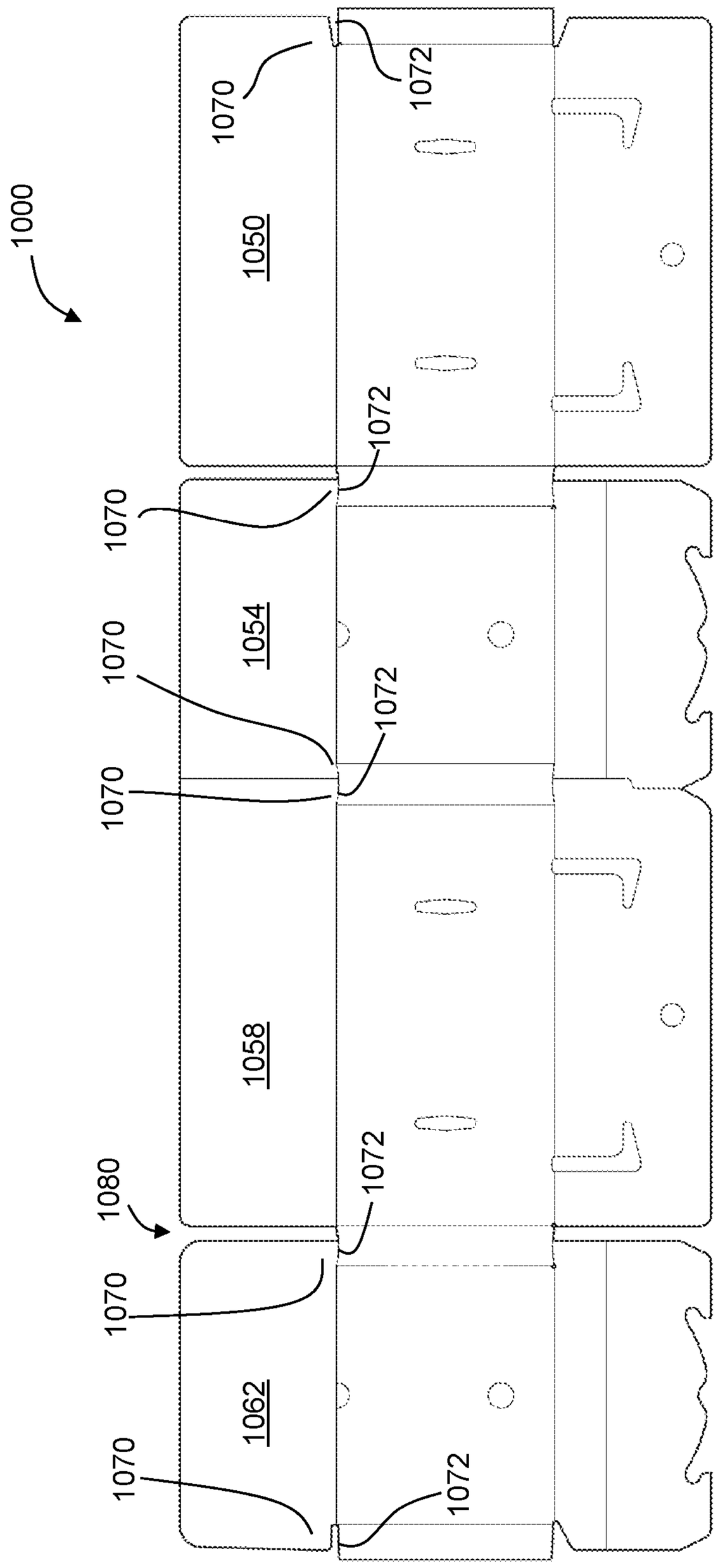
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FIG. 11

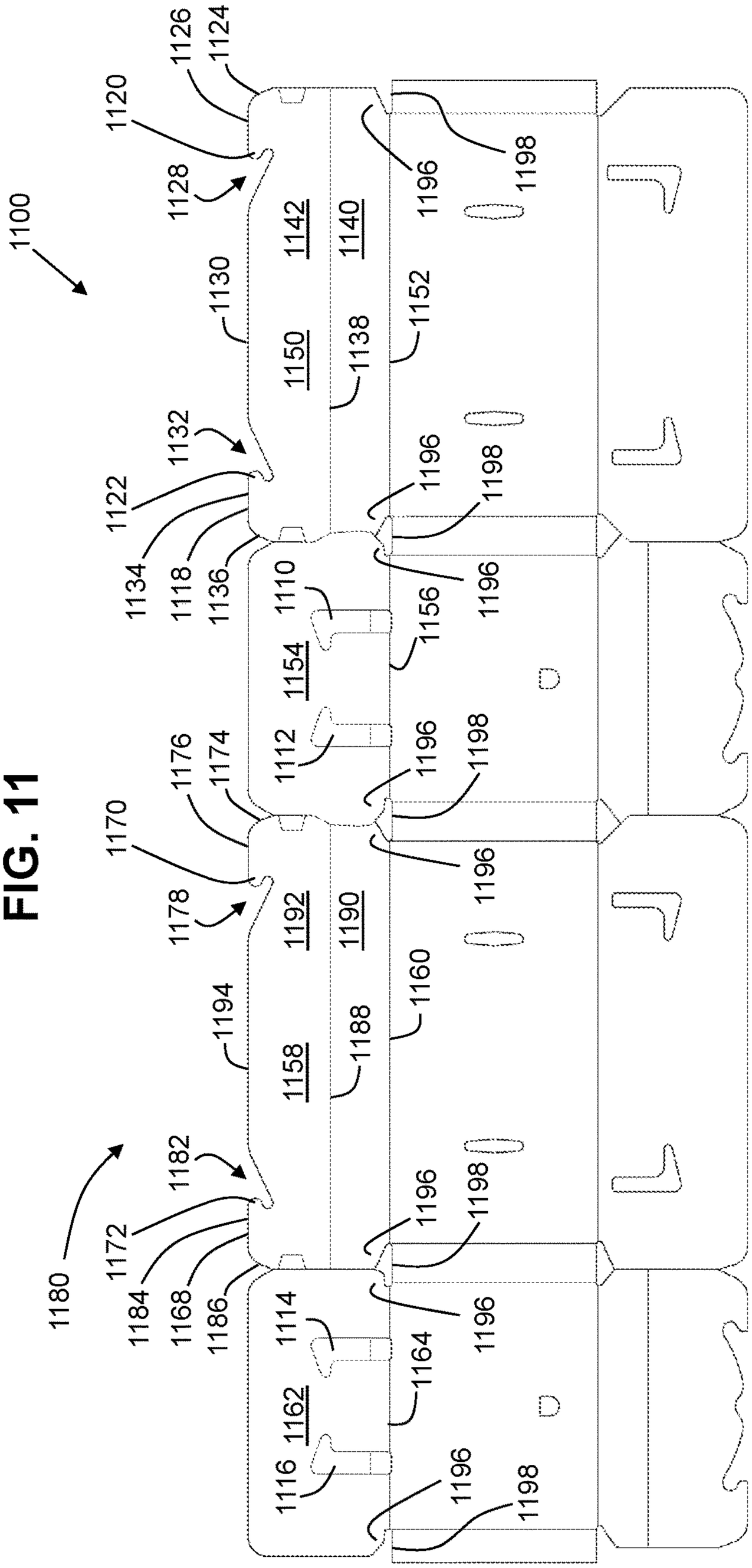
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FIG. 12

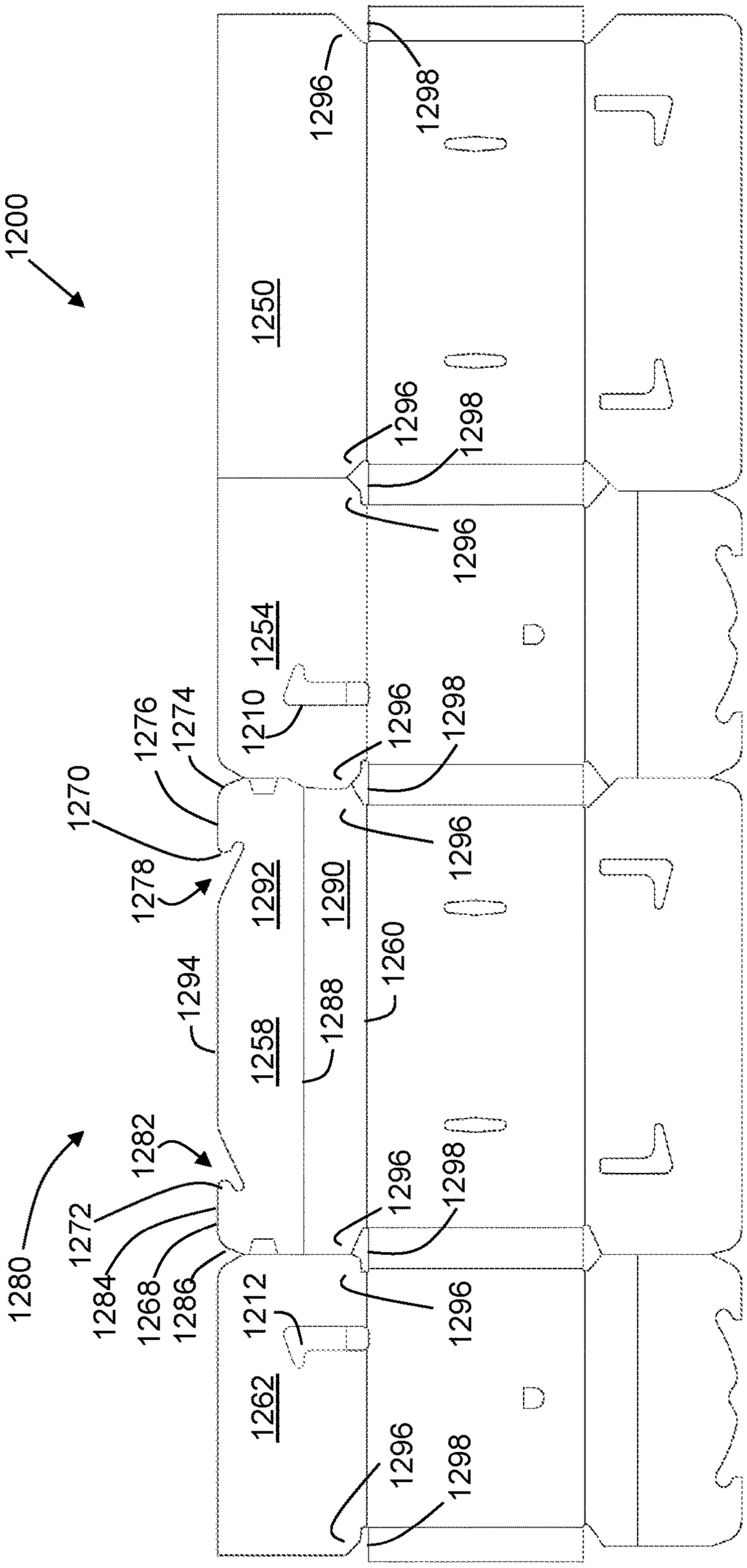
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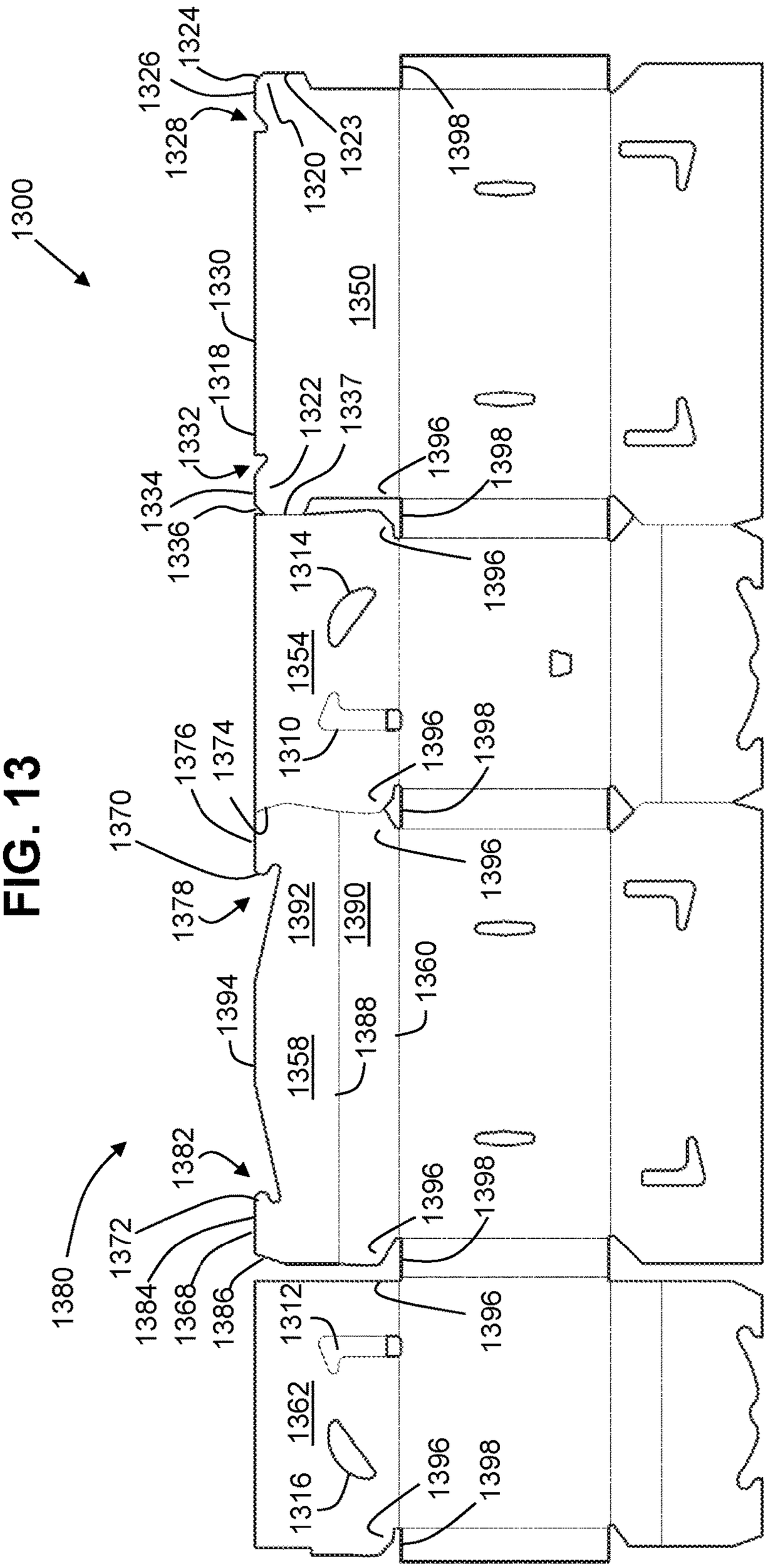
FIG. 13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BLANKS AND METHODS FOR FORMING CONTAINERS HAVING STACKING PLATFORMS

BACKGROUND

The embodiments described herein relate generally to a blank for forming a container and, more particularly, to a blank for forming a self-locking container having top and bottom stacking platforms.

At least some known containers that are used to transport and/or store products may be stacked one on the other when the products are being transported or stored. The side walls of the containers on the lower layers of the stack are configured to support a weight of the containers on the upper layers of the stack. However, if the weight on a lower container causes the side walls of the lower container to bulge slightly, a bottom wall of an upper container can settle into, or "nest" within, a cavity defined by the sidewalls of the lower container. Products within the lower container may then be required to support the weight of the upper layers. As such, the products within the containers may be damaged during transport and/or storage.

At least some such containers are at least partially formed using a folder-gluer machine. More specifically, at least some of those containers are four-sided and are formed on a folder-gluer machine configured to form four-sided containers.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

In one aspect, a blank of sheet material for forming a container is provided. The blank includes a plurality of side panels and a glue panel coupled together in series along a plurality of generally parallel fold lines. The plurality of side panels includes a plurality of corner panels. At least one of the plurality of generally parallel fold lines has an increased stiffness as compared to the others of the plurality of generally parallel fold lines. The blank also includes a plurality of bottom panels. Each bottom panel extends from a bottom edge of a corresponding one of the plurality of side panels. At least one of the plurality of bottom panels includes at least one bottom corner portion that extends adjacent to and beneath a free bottom edge of a corresponding one of the corner panels and the glue panel. The blank further includes a plurality of top panels. Each top panel extends from a top edge of a corresponding one of the plurality of side panels. At least one of the plurality of top panels includes at least one top corner portion that extends adjacent to and above a free top edge of a corresponding one of the corner panels and the glue panel.

In another aspect, a container formed from a blank of sheet material is provided. The blank includes a plurality of side panels and a glue panel coupled together in series along a plurality of generally parallel fold lines. At least one of the plurality of generally parallel fold lines has an increased stiffness as compared to the others of the plurality of generally parallel fold lines. The container includes a plurality of side walls that includes a plurality of corner walls. The plurality of side walls cooperate to define a boundary of the container. The container also includes a bottom wall that includes at least one bottom corner platform portion. Each at least one bottom corner platform portion is disposed proximate a bottom edge of a respective one of the corner walls, and each at least one bottom corner platform portion extends outside the boundary. The container further includes a top wall that includes at least one top corner platform portion.

Each at least one top corner platform portion is disposed proximate a top edge of a respective one of the corner walls, and each at least one top corner platform portion extends outside the boundary.

In yet another aspect, a method for forming a container from a blank of sheet material is provided. The blank includes a plurality of side panels and a glue panel coupled together in series along a plurality of generally parallel fold lines. At least one of the plurality of generally parallel fold lines has an increased stiffness as compared to the others of the plurality of generally parallel fold lines. The method includes rotating the plurality of side panels about the plurality of generally parallel fold lines to form a plurality of side walls of the container. The plurality of side walls includes a plurality of corner walls, and the plurality of side walls cooperate to define a boundary of the container. The method also includes rotating a plurality of bottom panels of the blank to be substantially perpendicular to the plurality of side walls to form a bottom wall of the container, such that the bottom wall includes at least one bottom corner platform portion. Each at least one bottom corner platform portion is disposed proximate a bottom edge of a respective one of the corner walls, and each at least one bottom corner platform portion extends outside the boundary. The method further includes rotating a plurality of top panels of the blank to be substantially perpendicular to the plurality of side walls to form a top wall of the container, such that the top wall includes at least one top corner platform portion. Each at least one top corner platform portion is disposed proximate a top edge of a respective one of the corner walls, and each at least one top corner platform portion extends outside the boundary.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1** is a top plan view of a first embodiment of a blank of sheet material.

FIG. **2** is a top perspective view of the example blank shown in FIG. **1** partially folded toward a knocked-down flat configuration within a folder gluer machine.

FIG. **3** is a top perspective view of a knocked-down-flat container formed from the blank shown in FIG. **1**.

FIG. **4** a top perspective view of an erected container formed from the blank shown in FIG. **1** and/or from the knocked-down-flat container shown in FIG. **3**, in an open configuration.

FIG. **5** is a top perspective view of the container shown in FIG. **4** with a top wall formed.

FIG. **6** is a top plan view of a second example embodiment of a blank of sheet material.

FIG. **7** is a top perspective view of a container formed from the blank shown in FIG. **6**.

FIG. **8** is a top plan view of an example reinforcing blank of sheet material.

FIG. **9** is a top perspective view of the container shown in FIG. **7** with a pair of reinforcing end structures each formed from the blank shown in FIG. **8** inserted.

FIG. **10** is a top plan view of a third example embodiment of a blank of sheet material.

FIG. **11** is a top plan view of a fourth example embodiment of a blank of sheet material.

FIG. **12** is a top plan view of a fifth example embodiment of a blank of sheet material.

FIG. **13** is a top plan view of a sixth example embodiment of a blank of sheet material.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The embodiments described herein provide an eight-sided container that includes top and bottom stacking platforms.

The top stacking platform is defined by corner platform portions of a top wall, and the bottom stacking platform is defined by corner platform portions of a bottom wall, that each extend beyond a boundary defined by the side walls. The container is constructed from a blank of sheet material using a machine and/or by hand. The blank includes a plurality of side panels coupled together in series by preformed, generally parallel fold lines. For example, the blank can be formed into a knocked-down-flat ("KDF") configuration using a folder-gluer machine configured for forming four-sided containers in KDF configuration, and the final construction of the container can be performed by hand and/or by another machine. In certain embodiments, at least one of the parallel fold lines is formed with an increased stiffness as compared to the others of the plurality of fold lines to facilitate forming the KDF container on a four-sided folder-gluer machine. The increased stiffness inhibits unintended rotation of the blank about the at least one fold line while the blank moves through the four-sided folder-gluer machine.

In certain embodiments, the container includes an insert configured to reinforce at least one side wall. The insert may be either attached to the at least one side wall, such as by stapling or gluing, or simply positioned against the at least one side wall. The at least one side wall reinforced with the insert enables the containers described herein to be stronger than similar containers without reinforced side walls, especially when subjected to vertical compression. For example, the inserts can be inserted in the field as containers are positioned on the lower levels of a stack of containers, enhancing an ability of the lower layer containers to support the upper layers of the stack.

In one embodiment, the container is fabricated from a paperboard material. The container, however, may be fabricated using any suitable material, and therefore is not limited to a specific type of material. In alternative embodiments, the container is fabricated using cardboard, plastic, fiberboard, paperboard, foamboard, corrugated paper, and/or any suitable material known to those skilled in the art and guided by the teachings herein provided.

In an example embodiment, the container and/or a blank includes at least one marking thereon including, without limitation, indicia that communicates the product, a manufacturer of the product and/or a seller of the product. For example, the marking may include printed text that indicates a product's name and briefly describes the product, logos and/or trademarks that indicate a manufacturer and/or seller of the product, and/or designs and/or ornamentation that attract attention. In another embodiment, the container is void of markings, such as, without limitation, indicia that communicates the product, a manufacturer of the product and/or a seller of the product. Furthermore, the container may have any suitable size, shape and/or configuration, i.e., any suitable number of sides having any suitable size, shape and/or configuration as described and/or illustrated herein. In one embodiment, the container includes a shape that provides functionality, such as a shape that facilitates packaging a food item, a shape that facilitates transporting the container, and/or a shape that facilitates stacking and/or arrangement of a plurality of containers.

Further, different embodiments described herein can vary in size and/or dimensions although similar labels are used for each embodiment. For example, although a depth is labeled similarly throughout the description, each embodiment can have varying depths.

Referring now to the drawings, and more specifically to FIGS. **1-5**, although as described above a container may have any suitable size, shape, and/or configuration, FIGS. **1-5** illustrate the construction or formation of a first embodiment of a container from a first embodiment of a blank. Specifically, FIG. **1** is a top plan view of an example embodiment of a blank **100** of sheet material. FIG. **2** is a top perspective view of blank **100** partially folded towards a knocked-down flat configuration within a folder-gluer machine. FIG. **3** is a top perspective view of knocked-down flat container **300** formed from blank **100**. FIG. **4** is a top perspective view of an erected container **400** formed from blank **100** and/or knocked down flat container **300**, in an open configuration. FIG. **5** is a top perspective view of container **400** with a top wall **446** formed.

Referring to FIG. **1**, blank **100** has a first or interior surface **102** and an opposing second or exterior surface **104**. Further, blank **100** defines a first edge **106** and an opposing second edge **108**. In the example embodiment, blank **100** includes, from first edge **106** to second edge **108**, a plurality of side panels **110**, **114**, **118**, **122**, **126**, **130**, **134**, and **138** and a glue panel **142** coupled together in series along a plurality of preformed, generally parallel fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140**. Fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140**, as well as other fold lines and/or hinge lines described herein, may include any suitable line of weakening and/or line of separation known to those skilled in the art and guided by the teachings herein provided. In certain embodiments, however, at least one of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140** is preformed to have a stiffness greater than a stiffness of the others of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140**, as will be described herein.

In the example embodiment, the plurality of side panels includes eight side panels and a glue panel. More specifically, blank **100** includes, from first edge **106** to second edge **108**, a first corner panel **110**, a first side panel **114**, a second corner panel **118**, a first end panel **122**, a third corner panel **126**, a second side panel **130**, a fourth corner panel **134**, a second end panel **138**, and a glue panel **142**. First side panel **114** extends from first corner panel **110** along fold line **112**, second corner panel **118** extends from first side panel **114** along fold line **116**, first end panel **122** extends from second corner panel **118** along fold line **120**, third corner panel **126** extends from first end panel **122** along fold line **124**, second side panel **130** extends from third corner panel **126** along fold line **128**, fourth corner panel **134** extends from second side panel **130** along fold line **132**, second end panel **138** extends from fourth corner panel **134** along fold line **136**, and glue panel **142** extends from second end panel **138** along fold line **140**.

In the example embodiment, each of first side panel **114** and second side panel **130** includes a pair of elongated vent holes **144**, while each of first end panel **122** and second end panel **138** includes a circular vent hole **146** and a half-circular vent hole **148**. It should be understood that in alternative embodiments, any panel and/or portion of blank **100** can include at least one of vent holes **144**, **146**, and **148** each having any suitable shape and/or configuration. In a particular embodiment, blank **100** does not include any of vent holes **144**, **146**, and **148**.

Blank **100** also includes a plurality of top panels **150**, **154**, **158**, and **162**. Each of the plurality of top panels **150**, **154**, **158**, and **162** extends from a top edge of a corresponding one of the plurality of side panels **110**, **114**, **118**, **122**, **126**, **130**, **134**, and **138**. In the example embodiment, the plurality of top panels includes a first top side panel **150**, a first top end panel **154**, a second top side panel **158**, and a second top end panel **162**. More specifically, first top side panel **150** extends

from a top edge of first side panel **114** defined by a fold line **152**, first top end panel **154** extends from a top edge of first end panel **122** defined by a fold line **156**, second top side panel **158** extends from a top edge of second side panel **130** defined by a fold line **160**, and second top end panel **162** extends from a top edge of second end panel **138** defined by a fold line **164**. Each of fold lines **152**, **156**, **160**, and **164** is generally perpendicular to fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140**.

In certain embodiments, at least one of the plurality of top panels **150**, **154**, **158**, and **162** includes at least one top corner portion **170** that extends adjacent to and above a free top edge **172** of a corresponding one of corner panels **110**, **118**, **126**, and **134** and glue panel **142**. When container **400** is erected from blank **100**, each top corner portion **170** is configured to extend beyond a boundary **450** defined by a plurality of side walls of container **400** to at least partially form a top stacking platform **462**, as will be described herein. For purposes of this disclosure, top corner portion **170** extends "above" free top edge **172** of a corresponding one of the corner panels where top corner portion **170** is located between the two of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140**, leading edge **106**, and trailing edge **108**, extended, that define the corresponding one of corner panels **110**, **118**, **126**, and **134** and glue panel **142**.

In the example embodiment, first top side panel **150** includes a first top corner portion **170** adjacent to and above free top edge **172** of first corner panel **110**. That is, first corner panel **110** is defined by leading edge **106** and fold line **112**, and first top corner portion **170** of first top side panel **150** lies between leading edge **106** extended and fold line **112** extended. Additionally in the example embodiment, first top side panel **150** includes a second top corner portion **170** adjacent to and above free top edge **172** of second corner panel **118**. That is, second corner panel **118** is defined by fold line **116** and fold line **120**, and second top corner portion **170** of first top side panel **150** lies between fold line **116** extended and fold line **120** extended.

Similarly in the example embodiment, first top end panel **154** includes a first top corner portion **170** adjacent to and above free top edge **172** of second corner panel **118** and a second top corner portion **170** adjacent to and above free top edge **172** of third corner panel **126**. Second top side panel **158** includes a first top corner portion **170** adjacent to and above free top edge **172** of third corner panel **126** and a second top corner portion **170** adjacent to and above free top edge **172** of fourth corner panel **134**. Second top end panel **162** includes a first top corner portion **170** adjacent to and above free top edge **172** of fourth corner panel **134** and a second top corner portion **170** adjacent to and above free top edge **172** of glue panel **142**.

In the example embodiment, first top side panel **150** has a depth D_1 that is about half of depth D_3 of container **400** (shown in FIG. **5**). Alternatively, first top side panel **150** has any suitable depth that enables blank **100** and/or container **400** to function as described herein. Similarly, in the example embodiment, second top side panel **158** has depth D_1. Alternatively, second top side panel **158** has any suitable depth, such as a depth other than depth D_1, that enables blank **100** and/or container **400** to function as described herein.

Blank **100** further includes a plurality of bottom panels **180**, **184**, **188**, and **192**. Each of the plurality of bottom panels **180**, **184**, **188**, and **192** extends from a bottom edge of a corresponding one of the plurality of side panels **110**, **114**, **118**, **122**, **126**, **130**, **134**, and **138**. In the example embodiment, the plurality of bottom panels includes a first bottom side panel **180**, a first bottom end panel **184**, a second bottom side panel **188**, and a second bottom end panel **192**. More specifically, first bottom side panel **180** extends from a bottom edge of first side panel **114** defined by a fold line **182**, first bottom end panel **184** extends from a bottom edge of first end panel **122** defined by a fold line **186**, second bottom side panel **188** extends from a bottom edge of second side panel **130** defined by a fold line **190**, and second bottom end panel **192** extends from a bottom edge of second end panel **138** defined by a fold line **194**. Each of fold lines **182**, **186**, **190**, and **194** is generally perpendicular to fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140**.

In certain embodiments, at least one of the plurality of bottom panels **180**, **184**, **188**, and **192** includes at least one bottom corner portion **200** that extends adjacent to and beneath a free bottom edge **202** of a corresponding one of corner panels **110**, **118**, **126**, and **134** and glue panel **142**. When container **400** is erected from blank **100**, each bottom corner portion **200** is configured to extend beyond boundary **450** to at least partially form a bottom stacking platform **482**, as will be described herein. For purposes of this disclosure, bottom corner portion **200** extends "beneath" free bottom edge **202** of a corresponding one of the corner panels where bottom corner portion **200** is located between the two of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140**, leading edge **106**, and trailing edge **108**, extended, that define the corresponding one of corner panels **110**, **118**, **126**, and **134** and glue panel **142**.

In the example embodiment, first bottom side panel **180** includes a first bottom corner portion **200** adjacent to and beneath free bottom edge **202** of first corner panel **110**. That is, first corner panel **110** is defined by leading edge **106** and fold line **112**, and first bottom corner portion **200** of first bottom side panel **180** lies between leading edge **106** extended and fold line **112** extended. Additionally in the example embodiment, first bottom side panel **180** includes a second bottom corner portion **200** adjacent to and beneath free bottom edge **202** of second corner panel **118**. That is, second corner panel **118** is defined by fold line **116** and fold line **120**, and first bottom corner portion **200** of first bottom side panel **180** lies between fold line **116** extended and fold line **120** extended.

Similarly in the example embodiment, first bottom end panel **184** includes a first bottom corner portion **200** adjacent to and beneath free bottom edge **202** of second corner panel **118** and a second bottom corner portion **200** adjacent to and beneath free bottom edge **202** of third corner panel **126**. Second bottom side panel **188** includes a first bottom corner portion **200** adjacent to and beneath free bottom edge **202** of third corner panel **126** and a second bottom corner portion **200** adjacent to and beneath free bottom edge **202** of fourth corner panel **134**. Second bottom end panel **192** includes a first bottom corner portion **200** adjacent to and beneath free bottom edge **202** of fourth corner panel **134** and a second bottom corner portion **200** adjacent to and beneath free bottom edge **202** of glue panel **142**.

In the example embodiment, first bottom side panel **180** has a depth D_2 that is about half of depth D_3 of container **400** (shown in FIG. **5**). Alternatively, first bottom side panel **180** has any suitable depth that enables blank **100** and/or container **400** to function as described herein. Similarly, in the example embodiment, second bottom side panel **188** has depth D_2. Alternatively, second bottom side panel **188** has any suitable depth, such as a depth other than depth D_2, that enables blank **100** and/or container **400** to function as described herein.

In certain embodiments, the plurality of bottom panels **180**, **184**, **188**, and **192** includes a bottom locking mechanism **280**. In the example embodiment, first bottom side panel **180** includes a first locking slot **210** and a second locking slot **212** that form a portion of bottom locking mechanism **280**. Each locking slot **210** and **212** is generally L-shaped, and second locking slot **212** is a mirror-image of first locking slot **210**. Similarly, in the example embodiment, second bottom side panel **188** includes a third locking slot **214** and a fourth locking slot **216** that form a portion of bottom locking mechanism **280**. Each locking slot **214** and **216** is generally L-shaped, and fourth locking slot **216** is a mirror-image of third locking slot **214**.

Further in the example embodiment, first bottom end panel **184** includes a free edge **218** that defines a first locking tab **220** and a second locking tab **222**. Locking tabs **220** and **222** form a portion of bottom locking mechanism **280**. More specifically, locking tab **220** is configured to be received by locking slot **212** and locking tab **222** is configured to be received by locking slot **214** when container **400** is erected. Free edge **218** includes a first angled portion **224**, a first horizontal portion **226**, a first notch **228**, a middle indent **230**, a second notch **232**, a second horizontal portion **234**, and a second angled portion **236**. First locking tab **220** is defined by first angled portion **224**, first horizontal portion **226**, and first notch **228**, and second locking tab **222** is defined by second notch **232**, second horizontal portion **234**, and second angled portion **236**. Alternatively, locking tabs **220** and/or **222** and/or free edge **218** have any suitable configuration that enables blank **100** and/or container **400** to function as described herein. Further, in an alternative embodiment, middle indent **230** is not defined by free edge **218**.

In the example embodiment, first bottom end panel **184** further includes a line of weakness **238** extending across first bottom end panel **184** substantially parallel to fold line **186**. Line of weakness **238** divides first bottom end panel **184** into a first portion **240** extending from fold line **186** and a second portion **242** extending from line of weakness **238** to free edge **218**. Line of weakness **238** is configured to facilitate insertion of locking tabs **220** and **222** into locking slots **212** and **214**, respectively, to erect container **400**. In an alternative embodiment, first bottom end panel **184** does not include line of weakness **238**.

Similarly, in the example embodiment, second bottom end panel **192** includes a free edge **248** that defines a third locking tab **250** and a fourth locking tab **252**. Locking tabs **250** and **252** form a portion of bottom locking mechanism **280**. More specifically, locking tab **250** is configured to be received by locking slot **216** and locking tab **252** is configured to be received by locking slot **210** when container **400** is erected. Free edge **248** includes a first angled portion **254**, a first horizontal portion **256**, a first notch **258**, a middle indent **260**, a second notch **262**, a second horizontal portion **264**, and a second angled portion **266**. Third locking tab **250** is defined by first angled portion **254**, first horizontal portion **256**, and first notch **258**, and fourth locking tab **252** is defined by second notch **262**, second horizontal portion **264**, and second angled portion **266**. Alternatively, locking tabs **250** and/or **252** and/or free edge **248** have any suitable configuration that enables blank **100** and/or container **400** to function as described herein. Further, in an alternative embodiment, middle indent **260** is not defined by free edge **248**.

In the example embodiment, second bottom end panel **192** further includes a line of weakness **268** extending across second bottom end panel **192** substantially parallel to fold line **194**. Line of weakness **268** divides second bottom end panel **192** into a first portion **270** extending from fold line **194** and a second portion **272** extending from line of weakness **268** to free edge **248**. Line of weakness **268** is configured to facilitate insertion of locking tabs **250** and **252** into locking slots **216** and **210**, respectively, to erect container **400**. In an alternative embodiment, second bottom end panel **192** does not include line of weakness **268**.

Thus, in the example embodiment, locking mechanism **280** includes locking slots **210**, **212**, **214**, and **216** and locking tabs **220**, **222**, **250**, and **252**. In alternative embodiments, bottom locking mechanism **280** includes any suitable components and/or configuration that enables container **400** to be formed from blank **100**.

With reference to FIGS. **1-3**, blank **100** is rotatable about two of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140** to form a knocked-down-flat container **300**. The two of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140** are chosen such that interior surface **12** of first corner panel **110** is moved into substantially face-to-face contact with exterior surface **14** of glue panel **142**. In certain embodiments, first corner panel **110** is coupled to glue panel **142** to form a manufacturing joint **302**. For example, an adhesive is disposed on at least one of interior surface **12** of first corner panel **110** and exterior surface **14** of glue panel **142** prior to rotation about the two fold lines. Alternatively, first corner panel **110** is coupled to glue panel **142** to form manufacturing joint **302** in any other suitable fashion, such as using fasteners and/or tape.

To form knocked-down-flat container **300** in the example embodiment, blank **100** is rotated about fold line **132** such that interior surface **12** of glue panel **142**, second end panel **138**, and fourth corner panel **134** are in substantially face-to-face contact with interior surface **12** of second side panel **130**. Blank **100** also is rotated about fold line **116** such that interior surface **12** of first side panel **114** is in substantially face-to-face contact with interior surface **12** of second corner panel **118**, first end panel **122**, third corner panel **126**, and second side panel **130**, and interior surface **12** of first corner panel **110** is in substantially face-to-face contact with exterior surface **14** of glue panel **142**. An adhesive disposed on at least one of interior surface **12** of first corner panel **110** and exterior surface **14** of glue panel **142** is used to couple first corner panel **110** and glue panel **142** together to form manufacturing joint **302**.

Forming knocked-down flat container **300** also rotates interior surface **12** of first bottom side panel **180** into substantially face-to-face contact with interior surface **12** of first bottom end panel **184**, and rotates interior surface **12** of second bottom end panel **192** into substantially face-to-face contact with interior surface **12** of second bottom side panel **188**. Similarly, forming knocked-down flat container **300** also rotates interior surface **12** of first top side panel **150** into substantially face-to-face contact with interior surface **12** of first top end panel **154**, and rotates interior surface **12** of second top end panel **162** into substantially face-to-face contact with interior surface **12** of second top side panel **158**.

In certain embodiments, at least one of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140** is formed with an increased stiffness as compared to the others of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140**. The increased stiffness inhibits unintended rotation of the blank about the at least one of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140**, such as while the blank moves through a folder-gluer machine, such as a folder-gluer machine designed to form four-sided containers. For example, the at least one of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140** having an

increased stiffness is other than the two of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140** about which blank **100** is rotated to form a knocked-down-flat container **300**.

For example, FIG. **2** illustrates blank **100** moving through a folder-gluer machine **10**. Folder-gluer machine **10** is any folder-gluer machine that is suitable for forming knocked-down-flat configurations of four-sided containers from blanks of sheet material. Folder-gluer machine **10** includes a suitable conveyance system **11** to move blank **100** through folder-gluer machine **10** in a direction of machine travel **13**, and a plurality of folder arms **16**. Plurality of folder arms **16** is configured to rotate blank **100** shown in FIG. **1** into the knocked-down-flat container **300** shown in FIG. **3** as blank **100** is moved through folder-gluer machine **10**. In certain embodiments, folder-gluer machine **10** also includes an adhesive station (not shown) configured to apply adhesive to at least one of interior surface **12** of first corner panel **110** and exterior surface **14** of glue panel **142** to facilitate forming manufacturing joint **302**.

In some embodiments, at least one of plurality of folder arms **16** is a stationary contoured rail that passively urges at least one of the plurality of side panels of blank **100**, such as first side panel **114** and/or second end panel **138**, into rotation towards another of the plurality of side panels, such as first end panel **122** and/or second side panel **130**, as blank **100** is conveyed through folder-gluer machine **10**. Additionally or alternatively, at least one of plurality of folder arms **16** is a movable arm that actively urges one of the plurality of side panels of blank **100** into rotation towards another of the plurality of side panels. Although only two folder arms **16** are shown in FIG. **2**, it should be understood that folder-gluer machine **10** may include any suitable number of folder arms or rails **16** and/or other components that enable knocked-down-flat container **300** to be formed from blank **100** as described herein.

In the example embodiment, folder-gluer machine **10** is configured to rotate blank **100** about fold lines **132** and **116** into the knocked-down-flat configuration shown in FIG. **3**. As folder arms **16** rotate blank **100** about fold lines **132** and **116** towards the knocked-down-flat configuration shown in FIG. **3**, fold line **136** supports at least a portion of a weight of second end panel **138**, second top end panel **162**, and second bottom end panel **192**. Additionally, at least one folder arm **16** imparts a force to second end panel **138**. The weight and/or force may cause second end panel **138** to rotate about fold line **136**, rather than solely about fold line **132** as intended. Such unintended rotation about fold line **136** potentially misaligns portions of blank **100** and/or disrupts operation of folder-gluer machine **10** during formation of knocked-down-flat container **300**. In the example embodiment, fold line **136** is formed with an increased stiffness as compared to fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, and **140** to inhibit unintended rotation of blank **100** about fold line **136**. Thus, blank **100** facilitates a formation of an eight-sided container in a knocked-down-flat configuration using a folder-gluer machine configured for four-sided containers. In certain embodiments, the increased stiffness of fold line **136** is not so stiff as to prevent a subsequent intended rotation about fold line **136**, for example when a user or another machine applies a force to erect container **400** from knocked-down-flat container **300**.

In certain embodiments, the increased stiffness of the at least one of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140** is imparted by a method of preforming the at least one of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140**. For example, the increased stiffness of the at least one of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140** is imparted during a die-cutting of blank **100**. In some embodiments, the at least one of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140** having an increased stiffness is formed as a perforation line, and each of the others of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140** is formed as a folding score.

More specifically, in the example embodiment, each of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, and **140** is preformed using a 0.883-inch 8-point folding score, while fold line **136** is preformed with relatively increased stiffness during die-cutting of blank **100** as a perforation line using a 0.25-inch knife with 0.375-inch spacing. In alternative embodiments, at least one of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, and **140** is preformed using another suitable score for a fold line, such as but not limited to one of a 0.860-inch 4-point score and a 0.870-inch 4-point score. Also in alternative embodiments, fold line **136** is preformed by a perforation of another suitable knife size and/or spacing, or by any other suitable method that provides an increased stiffness relative to fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, and **140**. In still other alternative embodiments, the increased stiffness of the at least one of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140** is imparted by a method of preforming the at least one of fold lines **112**, **116**, **120**, **124**, **128**, **132**, **136**, and **140** in another suitable fashion.

Referring to FIGS. **1** and **3-5**, to construct container **400** from knocked-down-flat container **300**, first side panel **114** is moved out of communication with first end panel **122**, and second end panel **138** is moved out of communication with second side panel **130**. For example, a user grasps at least one of vent holes **144** of first side panel **114** and vent holes **146** and **148** of second end panel **138**, and pulls upwards such that first side panel **114** moves away from first end panel **122** and second end panel **138** moves away from second side panel **130**. As another example, a user pushes fold line **116** and fold line **132** together, forcing first side panel **114** away from first end panel **122** and second end panel **138** away from second side panel **130**. As another example, a machine (not shown) applies a vacuum suction device to at least one of first side panel **114** and second end panel **138** such that first side panel **114** moves away from first end panel **122** and second end panel **138** moves away from second side panel **130**. In alternative embodiments, first side panel **114** is moved away from first end panel **122** and second end panel **138** is moved away from second side panel **130** in any suitable fashion.

Moving first side panel **114** out of communication with first end panel **122**, and second end panel **138** out of communication with second side panel **130**, also moves first bottom side panel **180** out of communication with first bottom end panel **184**, and moves second bottom end panel **192** out of communication with second bottom side panel **188**. Similarly, moving first side panel **114** out of communication with first end panel **122** and second end panel **138** out of communication with second side panel **130** also moves first top side panel **150** out of communication with first top end panel **154**, and moves second top end panel **162** out of communication with second top side panel **158**.

To continue construction of container **400** in the example embodiment, first bottom side panel **180** is rotated about fold line **182** toward interior surface **102** of first side panel **114**, and second bottom side panel **188** is rotated about fold line **190** toward interior surface **102** of second side panel **130**, such that first bottom side panel **180** is substantially perpendicular to first side panel **114** and second bottom side panel **188** is substantially perpendicular to second side panel **130**. First bottom end panel **184** is rotated about fold line **186** toward interior surface **102** of first end panel **122**. Second

portion **242** of first bottom end panel **184** is rotated slightly about line of weakness **238** toward interior surface **102** of first portion **240**. In the example embodiment, first bottom end panel **184** is not folded sufficiently to crease line of weakness **238** when second portion **242** is rotated toward first portion **240**. Rather, the slight rotation of second portion **242** facilitates inserting first locking tab **220** into second locking slot **212** and inserting second locking tab **222** into third locking slot **214**.

Similarly, second bottom end panel **192** is rotated about fold line **194** toward interior surface **102** of second end panel **138**. Second portion **272** of second bottom end panel **192** is rotated slightly about line of weakness **268** toward interior surface **102** of first portion **270**. In the example embodiment, second bottom end panel **192** is not folded sufficiently to crease line of weakness **268** when second portion **272** is rotated toward first portion **270**. Rather, the slight rotation of second portion **272** facilitates inserting third locking tab **250** into fourth locking slot **216** and inserting fourth locking tab **252** into first locking slot **210**.

First locking tab **220** and second locking tab **222** are inserted into second locking slot **212** and third locking slot **214**, respectively, such that first notch **228** cooperates with second locking slot **212** and second notch **232** cooperates with third locking slot **214** to couple first bottom end panel **184** to each of first bottom side panel **180** and second bottom side panel **188**. Similarly, third locking tab **250** and fourth locking tab **252** are inserted into fourth locking slot **216** and first locking slot **210**, respectively, such that first notch **258** cooperates with fourth locking slot **216** and second notch **262** cooperates with first locking slot **210** to couple second bottom end panel **192** to each of first bottom side panel **180** and second bottom side panel **188**.

Moreover, the elements of bottom locking mechanism **280** are configured such that each of bottom panels **180**, **184**, **188**, and **192** is substantially perpendicular to each of side panels **110**, **114**, **118**, **122**, **126**, **130**, **134**, and **138** when bottom panels **180**, **184**, **188**, and **192** are coupled together. More specifically, in the example embodiment, when each of locking tabs **220**, **222**, **250**, and **252** is inserted into the respective one of locking slots **212**, **214**, **216** and **210** such that bottom panels **180**, **184**, **188**, and **192** are coupled together, each of bottom panels **180**, **184**, **188**, and **192** is forced into a substantially perpendicular relationship to each of side panels **110**, **114**, **118**, **122**, **126**, **130**, **134**, and **138**. Bottom panels **180**, **184**, **188**, and **192** form a bottom wall **442** of container **400**.

In the example embodiment, container **400** also includes eight side walls. More specifically, container **400** includes a first corner wall **410**, a first side wall **414**, a second corner wall **418**, a first end wall **422**, a third corner wall **426**, a second side wall **430**, a fourth corner wall **434**, and a second end wall **438**. First corner wall **410** includes first corner panel **110** and glue panel **142**, first side wall **414** includes first side panel **114**, second corner wall **418** includes second corner panel **118**, first end wall **422** includes first end panel **122**, third corner wall **426** includes third corner panel **126**, second side wall **430** includes second side panel **130**, fourth corner wall **434** includes fourth corner panel **134**, and second end wall **438** includes second end panel **138**.

In the example embodiment, first corner wall **410** and third corner wall **426** are oppositely disposed and substantially parallel, first side wall **414** and second side wall **430** are oppositely disposed and substantially parallel, second corner wall **418** and fourth corner wall **434** are oppositely disposed and substantially parallel, and first end wall **422** and second end wall **438** are oppositely disposed, substantially parallel, and each substantially perpendicular to first side wall **414** and second side wall **430**. In alternative embodiments, at least one pair from among first corner wall **410** and third corner wall **426**, first side wall **414** and second side wall **430**, second corner wall **418** and fourth corner wall **434**, and first end wall **422** and second end wall **438** are not substantially parallel.

Side walls **410**, **414**, **418**, **422**, **426**, **430**, **434**, and **438** cooperate to define a cavity **402** of container **400**. Side walls **410**, **414**, **418**, **422**, **426**, **430**, **434**, and **438** also cooperate to define a closed, eight-sided geometric boundary **450** (illustrated in FIG. **5**) of container **400**, wherein each of the eight sides of boundary **450** extends in a plane parallel to a corresponding one of side walls **410**, **414**, **418**, **422**, **426**, **430**, **434**, and **438**. Bottom wall **442** includes at least one bottom corner platform portion **480**. Each at least one bottom corner platform portion **480** is disposed proximate a bottom edge of a respective one of corner walls **410**, **418**, **426**, and **434**. Each at least one bottom corner platform portion **480** extends outside boundary **450**. Each at least one bottom corner platform portion **480** is formed by bottom corner portion **200** of at least one of plurality of bottom panels **180**, **184**, **188**, and **192**. Bottom wall **442**, including the at least one bottom corner platform portion **480**, defines a bottom stacking platform **482** of container **400**.

In the example embodiment, bottom wall **442** includes four bottom corner platform portions **480** each proximate a bottom edge of a respective one of corner walls **410**, **418**, **426**, and **434**. Each of the four bottom corner platform portions **480** is shaped such that bottom stacking platform **482** has a generally rectangular shape, with the corners of the rectangular shape extending outside boundary **450**.

To form top wall **446** of container **400** in the example embodiment, first top end panel **154** is rotated about fold line **156** toward interior surface **102** of first end panel **122**, and second top end panel **162** is rotated about fold line **164** toward interior surface **102** of second end panel **138**, such that first top end panel **154** is substantially perpendicular to first end panel **122** and second top end panel **162** is substantially perpendicular to second end panel **138**. First top side panel **150** is rotated about fold line **152** toward interior surface **102** of first side panel **114**, and second top side panel **158** is rotated about fold line **160** toward interior surface **102** of second side panel **130**, such that first top side panel **150** is substantially perpendicular to first side panel **114** and second top side panel **158** is substantially perpendicular to second side panel **130**. Top wall **446** includes first top side panel **150**, second top side panel **158**, first top end panel **154**, and second top end panel **162**. In certain embodiments, at least two of first top side panel **150**, second top side panel **158**, first top end panel **154**, and second top end panel **162** are coupled together to secure top wall **446**, for example during shipping and storage of container **400**. For example, first top side panel **150** and second top side panel **158** coupled together using tape. For another example, an adhesive is used to coupled interior surface **102** of each first top side panel **150** and second top side panel **158** to exterior surface **104** of each of first top end panel **154** and second top end panel **162**. In alternative embodiments, at least two of first top side panel **150**, second top side panel **158**, first top end panel **154**, and second top end panel **162** are coupled together in any suitable fashion that enables container **400** to function as described herein. In still other alternative embodiments, none of first top side panel **150**, second top side panel **158**, first top end panel **154**, and second top end panel **162** are coupled together.

Top wall **446** includes at least one top corner platform portion **460**. Each at least one top corner platform portion **460** is disposed proximate a top edge of a respective one of corner walls **410**, **418**, **426**, and **434**. Each at least one top corner platform portion **460** extends outside boundary **450**. Each at least one top corner platform portion **460** is formed by top corner portion **170** of at least one of plurality of top panels **150**, **154**, **158**, and **162**. Top wall **446**, including the at least one top corner platform portion **460**, defines a top stacking platform **462** of container **400**.

In the example embodiment, top wall **446** includes four top corner platform portions **460** each proximate a top edge of a respective one of corner walls **410**, **418**, **426**, and **434**. Each of the top bottom corner platform portions **460** is shaped such that top stacking platform **462** has a generally rectangular shape, with the corners of the rectangular shape extending outside boundary **450**.

FIGS. **6** and **7** illustrate a second embodiment of a blank used to form a second embodiment of a container. Specifically, FIG. **6** is a top plan view of an example embodiment of a blank **600** of sheet material. FIG. **7** is a top perspective view of a container **800** formed from blank **600**.

Blank **600** is similar in many respects to blank **100**, but blank **600** has a different arrangement of top panels, as will be described herein. Like blank **100**, blank **600** has first or interior surface **102** and opposing second or exterior surface **104**, and defines first edge **106** and opposing second edge **108**. In the example embodiment, similar to blank **100**, blank **600** includes, from first edge **106** to second edge **108**, a plurality of side panels **610**, **614**, **618**, **622**, **626**, **630**, **634**, and **638** coupled together in series along a plurality of preformed, generally parallel fold lines **612**, **616**, **620**, **624**, **628**, **632**, **636**, and **640**. In the example embodiment, the plurality of side panels includes, from first edge **106** to second edge **108**, a first corner panel **610**, a first side panel **614**, a second corner panel **618**, a first end panel **622**, a third corner panel **626**, a second side panel **630**, a fourth corner panel **634**, a second end panel **638**, and a glue panel **642**. Also like blank **100**, blank **600** also includes elongated vent holes **644**, circular vent holes **646**, and half-circular vent holes **648**. It should be understood that in alternative embodiments, any panel and/or portion of blank **600** can include at least one of vent holes **644**, **646**, and **648** each having any suitable shape and/or configuration. In a particular embodiment, blank **600** does not include any of vent holes **644**, **646**, and **648**.

Also like blank **100**, in certain embodiments, at least one of fold lines **612**, **616**, **620**, **624**, **628**, **632**, **636**, and **640** is preformed to have a stiffness greater than a stiffness of the others of fold lines **612**, **616**, **620**, **624**, **628**, **632**, **636**, and **640**. For example, blank **600** can be rotated about another two of fold lines **612**, **616**, **620**, **624**, **628**, **632**, **636**, and **640** to form a knocked-down-flat container (not shown) in similar fashion as for knocked-down-flat container **300**, and as described above for blank **100**, the increased stiffness of the one of fold lines **612**, **616**, **620**, **624**, **628**, **632**, **636**, and **640** inhibits unintended rotation of the blank about the at least one of fold line, such as while blank **600** moves through a folder-gluer machine. The at least one fold line can be formed in any suitable fashion, as described above. In the example embodiment, fold line **636** is preformed to have a stiffness greater than a stiffness of fold lines **612**, **616**, **620**, **624**, **628**, **632**, and **640**.

Further like blank **100**, blank **600** includes a plurality of bottom panels **680**, **684**, **688**, and **692** that include a bottom locking mechanism **780**, which functions in a similar fashion as bottom locking mechanism **280** described above. In the example embodiment, bottom locking mechanism **780** includes generally L-shaped mirror-image locking slots **710** and **712** on first bottom side panel **680**, generally L-shaped mirror-image locking slots **714** and **716** on second bottom side panel **688**, locking tabs **720** and **722** on first bottom end panel **684**, and locking tabs **750** and **752** on second bottom end panel **692**. In addition, bottom end panels **684** and **692** include lines of weakness **738** and **768**, respectively.

In certain embodiments, at least one of the plurality of bottom panels **680**, **684**, **688**, and **692** includes at least one bottom corner portion **700** that extends adjacent to a free bottom edge **702** of a respective one of corner panels **610**, **618**, **626**, and **634** and glue panel **642**. When container **800** is formed from blank **600**, each bottom corner portion **700** is configured to extend beyond a boundary **850** defined by the plurality of side walls of container **800** to at least partially form a bottom stacking platform **882**. In the example embodiment, first bottom side panel **680** includes a first bottom corner portion **700** adjacent to free bottom edge **702** of first corner panel **610**. First bottom end panel **684** includes a first bottom corner portion **700** adjacent to free bottom edge **702** of second corner panel **618** and a second bottom corner portion **700** adjacent to free bottom edge **702** of third corner panel **626**. Second bottom side panel **688** includes a first bottom corner portion **700** adjacent to free bottom edge **702** of third corner panel **126**. Second bottom end panel **692** includes a first bottom corner portion **700** adjacent to free bottom edge **702** of fourth corner panel **634** and a second bottom corner portion **700** adjacent to free bottom edge **702** of glue panel **642**.

Blank **600** also includes a plurality of top panels **650**, **654**, **658**, and **662**. In the example embodiment, the plurality of top panels includes a first top side panel **650**, a first top end panel **654**, a second top side panel **658**, and a second top end panel **662**. More specifically, first top side panel **650** extends from a top edge of first side panel **614** defined by a fold line **652**, first top end panel **654** extends from a top edge of first end panel **622** defined by a fold line **656**, second top side panel **658** extends from a top edge of second side panel **630** defined by a fold line **660**, and second top end panel **662** extends from a top edge of second end panel **638** defined by a fold line **664**. Each of fold lines **652**, **656**, **660**, and **664** is generally perpendicular to fold lines **612**, **616**, **620**, **624**, **628**, **632**, **636**, and **640**.

In certain embodiments, at least two of plurality of top panels **650**, **654**, **658**, and **662** are coupled together to enable an enhanced efficiency of using blank **600** with certain types of folder-gluer machines. In the example embodiment, blank **600** is configured to be rotated about fold lines **616** and **632** to form a knocked-down flat container (not shown). Rather than being separated by a full cut line, second top side panel **658** and second top end panel **662** are coupled together across a line of weakness **676** that lies between fold lines **632** and **636** extended. For at least some known folder-gluer machines, blank **600** may be more suitable than a blank, such as for example blank **100**, that has an extended gap between, or allows independent movement of, adjacent top panels proximate to fold line **632**.

In the example embodiment, line of weakness **676** is a segmented, or partial, cut line. At least one tab **678** couples second top side panel **658** and second top end panel **662** across line of weakness **676**. For example, the at least one tab **678** is integrally formed by retaining material at a location of each tab **678** when blank **600** is die cut. In the example embodiment, the at least one tab **678** includes three tabs **678**, with the two tabs **678** closest to free top edge **672** of fourth corner panel **634** each having a width of about

0.125 inches, and the remaining tab **678** having a width of about 0.1875 inches. In alternative embodiments, any suitable number of tabs **678** having any suitable width are used to couple second top side panel **658** and second top end panel **662** across the segmented, or partial, cut line defining line of weakness **676**. In other alternative embodiments, segmented, line of weakness **676** is formed by another suitable structure, such as a perforation.

In certain embodiments, second top side panel **658** further includes a preformed fold line **674** defined generally parallel to, and extending from, fold line **632**. Fold line **674** facilitates rotating blank **600** about fold line **632** into a knocked-down-flat configuration (not shown) while second top side panel **658** and second top end panel **662** are coupled together.

In certain embodiments, similar to blank **100**, at least one of the plurality of top panels **650**, **654**, **658**, and **662** includes at least one top corner portion **670** that extends adjacent to and above a free top edge **672** of a respective one of corner panels **610**, **618**, **626**, and **634** and glue panel **642**. When container **800** is formed from blank **600**, each top corner portion **670** is configured to extend beyond boundary **850** to at least partially form a top stacking platform **862**. In the example embodiment, first top side panel **650** includes a first top corner portion **670** adjacent to and above free top edge **672** of first corner panel **610**. First top end panel **654** includes a first top corner portion **670** adjacent to and above free top edge **672** of second corner panel **618** and a second top corner portion **670** adjacent to and above free top edge **672** of third corner panel **626**. Second top side panel **658** includes a first top corner portion **670** adjacent to and above free top edge **672** of third corner panel **626**. Second top end panel **662** includes a first top corner portion **670** adjacent to and above free top edge **672** of fourth corner panel **634** and a second top corner portion **670** adjacent to and above free top edge **672** of glue panel **642**.

Container **800** is similar to container **400** and includes a first corner wall **810**, a first side wall **814**, a second corner wall **818**, a first end wall **822**, a third corner wall **826**, a second side wall **830**, a fourth corner wall **834**, and a second end wall **838**. First corner wall **810** includes first corner panel **610** and glue panel **642**, first side wall **814** includes first side panel **614**, second corner wall **818** includes second corner panel **618**, first end wall **822** includes first end panel **622**, third corner wall **826** includes third corner panel **626**, second side wall **830** includes second side panel **630**, fourth corner wall **834** includes fourth corner panel **634**, and second end wall **838** includes second end panel **638**. Side walls **810**, **814**, **818**, **822**, **826**, **830**, **834**, and **838** cooperate to define a closed, eight-sided geometric boundary **850** of container **800**, wherein each of the eight sides of boundary **850** extends in a plane parallel to a corresponding one of side walls **810**, **814**, **818**, **822**, **826**, **830**, **834**, and **838**.

Bottom panels **680**, **684**, **688**, and **692** form bottom wall **842** of container **800**. Bottom wall **842** includes a bottom corner platform portion **880** proximate a bottom edge of each of corner walls **810**, **818**, **826**, and **834**. Each bottom corner platform portion **880** extends outside boundary **850**. Each bottom corner platform portion **880** is formed by bottom corner portion **700** of at least one of plurality of bottom panels **680**, **684**, **688**, and **692**. Bottom wall **842**, including bottom corner platform portions **880**, defines a bottom stacking platform **882** of container **800**, similar to bottom stacking platform **482** of container **400**.

Top panels **650**, **654**, **658**, and **662** form top wall **846** of container **800**. Top wall **846** includes a top corner platform portion **860** proximate a top edge of each of corner walls **810**, **818**, **826**, and **834**. Each top corner platform portion **860** extends outside boundary **850**. Each top corner platform portion **860** is formed by top corner portion **670** of at least one of plurality of top panels **650**, **654**, **658**, and **662**. Top wall **846**, including top corner platform portions **860**, defines a top stacking platform **862** of container **800**, similar to top stacking platform **462** of container **400**.

In the example embodiment, container **800** is formed from blank **600** in a similar fashion as described above for forming container **400** from blank **100**. However, in certain embodiments, forming top wall **846** includes an additional step of separating second top side panel **658** and second top end panel **662** along line of weakness **676** prior to rotating each of second top side panel **658** and second top end panel **662** to be generally perpendicular to second side panel **630** and second end panel **638**, respectively. For example, a user applies a force to at least one of second top side panel **658** and second top end panel **662** to separate second top side panel **658** and second top end panel **662** along line of weakness **676**.

FIGS. **8** and **9** illustrate a container **800** that additionally includes a pair of reinforcing end structures **950**. Specifically, FIG. **8** is a top plan view of an example reinforcing blank **900** of sheet material used to form each reinforcing end structure **950**. FIG. **9** is a top perspective view of container **800** prior to formation of top wall **846**, with a pair of reinforcing end structures **950** inserted as part of end walls **822** and **838**.

With reference to FIGS. **6-9**, reinforcing blank **900** includes a first, or interior, surface **920** and a second, or exterior, surface **922**. Reinforcing blank **900** extends from a first edge **901** to a second edge **902**. In certain embodiments, reinforcing blank **900** is symmetric about a centerline **924**, such that reinforcing end structure **950** formed from reinforcing blank **900** can be equivalently positioned within container **800** with either of first edge **901** and second edge **902** adjacent bottom wall **842**.

Reinforcing blank **900** includes a plurality of reinforcing panels coupled together in series along a plurality of preformed, generally parallel fold lines. In the example embodiment, the plurality of reinforcing panels includes a reinforcing end panel **904**. Reinforcing end panel **904** is configured to be generally congruent to either of end panels **622** and **638** of blank **600**. Reinforcing end panel **904** includes a pair of vent holes **946**, and each of the pair of vent holes is configured to align with vent hole **646** of end panel **622** or **638** when a respective edge **901** or **902** is positioned adjacent bottom wall **842**.

A pair of reinforcing corner panels **908** extend from respective fold lines **906** defined at opposing side edges of reinforcing end panel **904**. Each corner panel **908** is configured to be generally congruent to any of first corner panel **610**, second corner panel **618**, third corner panel **626**, and fourth corner panel **634**. In the example embodiment, a pair of reinforcing side panels **912** each extends from a fold line **910** defined at a side edge of each reinforcing corner panel **908**.

To form reinforcing end structure **950** from reinforcing blank **900**, each reinforcing corner panel **908** is rotated about a respective fold line **906** toward interior surface **920** of reinforcing end panel **904**. Each reinforcing side panel **912** also is rotated about a respective fold line **910** toward interior surface **920** of reinforcing end panel **904**.

In the example embodiment, each reinforcing end panel **904** of the pair of reinforcing end structures **950** is positioned adjacent a respective one of the opposing end walls **822** and **838** of container **800**. Each reinforcing end structure

950 is positioned such that one of first edge 901 and second edge 902 is adjacent bottom wall 842. In certain embodiments, each reinforcing end panel 904 is secured to a respective end wall 822 and 838, such as by at least one of an adhesive, fasteners, or in another suitable fashion that enables reinforcing end structures 950 to function as described herein. Additionally or alternatively, at least one of reinforcing corner panels 908 is secured to a respective one of corner walls 810, 818, 826, and 834. Additionally or alternatively, at least one of reinforcing side panels 912 is secured to a respective one of side walls 814 and 830. In alternative embodiments, reinforcing end structures 950 are not secured to container 800, and are maintained in position adjacent respective end walls 822 and 838 by a product disposed within container 800.

With the pair of reinforcing end structures 950 inserted, first corner wall 810 includes first corner panel 610, glue panel 642, and a first reinforcing corner panel 908 of a first of the pair of reinforcing end structures 950. First side wall 814 includes first side panel 614, a first reinforcing side panel 912 of the first reinforcing end structure 950, and a second reinforcing side panel 912 of a second of the pair of reinforcing end structures 950. Second corner wall 818 includes second corner panel 618 and a second reinforcing corner panel 908 of the second reinforcing end structure 950. First end wall 822 includes first end panel 622 and reinforcing end panel 904 of the second reinforcing end structure 950. Third corner wall 826 includes third corner panel 626 and a first reinforcing corner panel 908 of the second reinforcing end structure 950. Second side wall 830 includes second side panel 630, a first reinforcing side panel 912 of the second reinforcing end structure 950, and a second reinforcing side panel 912 of the first reinforcing end structure 950. Fourth corner wall 834 includes fourth corner panel 634 and a second reinforcing corner panel 908 of the first reinforcing end structure 950. Second end wall 838 includes second end panel 638 and reinforcing end panel 904 of the first reinforcing end structure 950.

Reinforcing end structures 950 advantageously provide increased stacking strength to container 800. In an embodiment, reinforcing end structures 950 are formed and inserted in the field into containers 800 that are positioned on one of a plurality of lower levels of a stack of containers 800, while reinforcing end structures 950 are not inserted into containers 800 that are on one of a plurality of upper levels of the stack of containers 800. In alternative embodiments, reinforcing end structures 950 are inserted into any suitable number of containers 800, including but not limited to all containers 800 and no containers 800.

Although reinforcing blank 900 and reinforcing end structures 950 are illustrated as configured for use with container 800, it should be understood that in alternative embodiments, reinforcing blank 900 and reinforcing end structures 950 are configured for use with container 400 or any other suitable embodiment of a container contemplated herein. Likewise, it should be understood that in alternative embodiments, container 800 or any other suitable embodiment of a container contemplated herein includes one or no reinforcing end structures 950.

FIG. 10 is a top plan view of a third embodiment of a blank that may be used to form a third embodiment of a container. Specifically, FIG. 10 is a top plan view of an example embodiment of a blank 1000 of sheet material. With reference to FIGS. 6, 7, and 10, blank 1000 is substantially identical to blank 600 except for the plurality of top panels 1050, 1054, 1058, and 1062, and as such the other elements of blank 1000 need not be relabeled. More specifically, unlike top panels 658 and 662 of blank 600, top panels 1058 and 1062 of blank 1000 are not coupled together. Rather, a gap 1080 is preformed between top panels 1058 and 1062. A container (not shown) may be formed from blank 1000 in the same fashion as container 800 is formed from blank 600, but without requiring the extra step of separating top panels, such as top panels 658 and 662, to form the container. In certain embodiments, blank 1000 facilitates an increased efficiency of operation of a folder-gluer machine without requiring a user to perform the extra step of separating top panels, such as top panels 658 and 662, to form the container, and without embedding a fold line, such as fold line 674, within top panel 1058. Similar to blank 600, at least one of the plurality of top panels 1050, 1054, 1058, and 1062 includes at least one top corner portion 1070 that extends adjacent to and above a free top edge 1072 of a respective corner panel and/or glue panel, and each top corner portion 1070 is configured to at least partially form a top stacking platform of the container.

FIG. 11 is a top plan view of a fourth embodiment of a blank that may be used to form a fourth embodiment of a container. Specifically, FIG. 11 is a top plan view of an example embodiment of a blank 1100 of sheet material. With reference to FIGS. 1-5 and 11, blank 1100 is substantially identical to blank 100 except for the plurality of top panels 1150, 1154, 1158, and 1162, and as such the other elements of blank 1100 need not be relabeled. More specifically, plurality of top panels 1150, 1154, 1158, and 1162 include an example embodiment of a top locking mechanism, designated top locking mechanism 1180.

In the example embodiment, first top end panel 1154 includes a first locking slot 1110 and a second locking slot 1112 that form a portion of top locking mechanism 1180. Each locking slot 1110 and 1112 is generally L-shaped, and second locking slot 1112 is a mirror-image of first locking slot 1110. Similarly, in the example embodiment, second top end panel 1162 includes a third locking slot 1114 and a fourth locking slot 1116 that form a portion of top locking mechanism 1180. Each locking slot 1114 and 1116 is generally L-shaped, and fourth locking slot 1116 is a mirror-image of third locking slot 1114.

Further in the example embodiment, first top side panel 1150 includes a free edge 1118 that defines a first locking tab 1120 and a second locking tab 1122. Locking tabs 1120 and 1122 form a portion of top locking mechanism 1180. More specifically, locking tab 1120 is configured to be received by locking slot 1116 and locking tab 1122 is configured to be received by locking slot 1110 when the container (not shown) is erected. Free edge 1118 includes a first angled portion 1124, a first horizontal portion 1126, a first notch 1128, a middle horizontal portion 1130, a second notch 1132, a second horizontal portion 1134, and a second angled portion 1136. First locking tab 1120 is defined by first angled portion 1124, first horizontal portion 1126, and first notch 1128, and second locking tab 1122 is defined by second notch 1132, second horizontal portion 1134, and second angled portion 1136. Alternatively, locking tabs 1120 and/or 1122 and/or free edge 1118 have any suitable configuration that enables blank 1100 to function as described herein. Further, in an alternative embodiment, middle horizontal portion 1130 includes middle indent (not shown).

In the example embodiment, first top side panel 1150 further includes a line of weakness 1138 extending across first top side panel 1150 substantially parallel to fold line 1152. Line of weakness 1138 divides first top side panel 1150 into a first portion 1140 extending from fold line 1152 and a second portion 1142 extending from line of weakness

1138 to free edge 1118. Line of weakness 1138 is configured to facilitate insertion of locking tabs 1120 and 1122 into locking slots 1116 and 1110, respectively, to erect the container. In an alternative embodiment, first top side panel 1150 does not include line of weakness 1138.

Similarly, in the example embodiment, second top side panel 1158 includes a free edge 1168 that defines a first locking tab 1170 and a second locking tab 1172. Locking tabs 1170 and 1172 form a portion of top locking mechanism 1180. More specifically, locking tab 1170 is configured to be received by locking slot 1112 and locking tab 1172 is configured to be received by locking slot 1114 when the container is erected. Free edge 1168 includes a first angled portion 1174, a first horizontal portion 1176, a first notch 1178, a middle horizontal portion 1194, a second notch 1182, a second horizontal portion 1184, and a second angled portion 1186. First locking tab 1170 is defined by first angled portion 1174, first horizontal portion 1176, and first notch 1178, and second locking tab 1172 is defined by second notch 1182, second horizontal portion 1184, and second angled portion 1186. Alternatively, locking tabs 1170 and/or 1172 and/or free edge 1168 have any suitable configuration that enables blank 1100 to function as described herein. Further, in an alternative embodiment, middle horizontal portion 1194 includes a middle indent (not shown).

In the example embodiment, second top side panel 1158 further includes a line of weakness 1188 extending across second top side panel 1158 substantially parallel to fold line 1160. Line of weakness 1188 divides second top side panel 1158 into a first portion 1190 extending from fold line 1160 and a second portion 1192 extending from line of weakness 1188 to free edge 1168. Line of weakness 1188 is configured to facilitate insertion of locking tabs 1170 and 1172 into locking slots 1112 and 1114, respectively, to erect the container. In an alternative embodiment, second top side panel 1158 does not include line of weakness 1188.

Thus, in the example embodiment of FIG. 11, top locking mechanism 1180 includes locking slots 1110, 1112, 1114, and 1116 and locking tabs 1120, 1122, 1170, and 1172. Also, similar to blank 100, at least one of the plurality of top panels 1150, 1154, 1158, and 1162 includes at least one top corner portion 1196 that extends adjacent to and above a free top edge 1198 of a respective corner panel and/or glue panel, and each top corner portion 1196 is configured to at least partially form a top stacking platform of the container. A container (not shown) may be formed from blank 1100 in the same fashion as container 400 is formed from blank 100, but including a top wall with locking mechanism 1180 formed in a similar fashion as bottom wall 442 of container 400.

FIG. 12 is a top plan view of a fifth embodiment of a blank that may be used to form a fifth embodiment of a container. Specifically, FIG. 12 is a top plan view of an example embodiment of a blank 1200 of sheet material. With reference to FIGS. 1-5 and 12, blank 1200 is substantially identical to blank 100 except for the plurality of top panels 1250, 1254, 1258, and 1262, and as such the other elements of blank 1200 need not be relabeled. More specifically, plurality of top panels 1250, 1254, 1258, and 1262 include another example embodiment of a top locking mechanism, designated top locking mechanism 1280.

In the example embodiment, first top end panel 1254 includes a first locking slot 1210 that forms a portion of top locking mechanism 1280, and second top end panel 1262 includes a second locking slot 1212 that forms a portion of top locking mechanism 1280. Each locking slot 1210 and 1212 is generally L-shaped, and second locking slot 1212 is a mirror-image of first locking slot 1210.

Further in the example embodiment, second top side panel 1258 includes a free edge 1268 that defines a first locking tab 1270 and a second locking tab 1272. Locking tabs 1270 and 1272 form a portion of top locking mechanism 1280. More specifically, locking tab 1270 is configured to be received by locking slot 1210 and locking tab 1272 is configured to be received by locking slot 1212 when the container is erected. Free edge 1268 includes a first angled portion 1274, a first horizontal portion 1276, a first notch 1278, a middle horizontal portion 1294, a second notch 1282, a second horizontal portion 1284, and a second angled portion 1286. First locking tab 1270 is defined by first angled portion 1274, first horizontal portion 1276, and first notch 1278, and second locking tab 1272 is defined by second notch 1282, second horizontal portion 1284, and second angled portion 1286. Alternatively, locking tabs 1270 and/or 1272 and/or free edge 1268 have any suitable configuration that enables blank 1200 to function as described herein. Further, in an alternative embodiment, middle horizontal portion 1294 includes a middle indent (not shown).

In the example embodiment, second top side panel 1258 further includes a line of weakness 1288 extending across second top side panel 1258 substantially parallel to fold line 1260. Line of weakness 1288 divides second top side panel 1258 into a first portion 1290 extending from fold line 1260 and a second portion 1292 extending from line of weakness 1288 to free edge 1268. Line of weakness 1288 is configured to facilitate insertion of locking tabs 1270 and 1272 into locking slots 1210 and 1212, respectively, to erect the container. In an alternative embodiment, second top side panel 1258 does not include line of weakness 1288.

Thus, in the example embodiment of FIG. 12, top locking mechanism 1280 includes locking slots 1210 and 1212 and locking tabs 1270 and 1272. Also, similar to blank 100, at least one of the plurality of top panels 1250, 1254, 1258, and 1262 includes at least one top corner portion 1296 that extends adjacent to and above a free top edge 1298 of a respective corner panel and/or glue panel, and each top corner portion 1296 is configured to at least partially form a top stacking platform of the container. A container (not shown) may be formed from blank 1200 in the same fashion as container 400 is formed from blank 100, but including a top wall with locking mechanism 1280 formed in a similar fashion as bottom wall 442 of container 400.

FIG. 13 is a top plan view of a sixth embodiment of a blank that may be used to form a sixth embodiment of a container. Specifically, FIG. 13 is a top plan view of an example embodiment of a blank 1300 of sheet material. With reference to FIGS. 1-5 and 13, blank 1300 is substantially identical to blank 100 except for the plurality of top panels 1350, 1354, 1358, and 1362, and as such the other elements of blank 1300 need not be relabeled. More specifically, plurality of top panels 1350, 1354, 1358, and 1362 include another example embodiment of a top locking mechanism, designated top locking mechanism 1380.

In the example embodiment, first top end panel 1354 includes a first locking slot 1310 that forms a portion of top locking mechanism 1380, and second top end panel 1362 includes a second locking slot 1312 that forms a portion of top locking mechanism 1380. Each locking slot 1310 and 1312 is generally L-shaped, and second locking slot 1312 is a mirror-image of first locking slot 1310.

Further in the example embodiment, second top side panel 1358 includes a free edge 1368 that defines a first locking tab 1370 and a second locking tab 1372. Locking tabs 1370 and 1372 form a portion of top locking mechanism 1380. More specifically, locking tab 1370 is configured to be

received by locking slot **1310** and locking tab **1372** is configured to be received by locking slot **1312** when the container is erected. Free edge **1368** includes a first angled portion **1374**, a first horizontal portion **1376**, a first notch **1378**, a middle horizontal portion **1394**, a second notch **1382**, a second horizontal portion **1384**, and a second angled portion **1386**. First locking tab **1370** is defined by first angled portion **1374**, first horizontal portion **1376**, and first notch **1378**, and second locking tab **1372** is defined by second notch **1382**, second horizontal portion **1384**, and second angled portion **1386**. Alternatively, locking tabs **1370** and/or **1372** and/or free edge **1368** have any suitable configuration that enables blank **1300** to function as described herein. Further, in an alternative embodiment, middle horizontal portion **1394** includes a middle indent (not shown).

In the example embodiment, second top side panel **1358** further includes a line of weakness **1388** extending across second top side panel **1358** substantially parallel to fold line **1360**. Line of weakness **1388** divides second top side panel **1358** into a first portion **1390** extending from fold line **1360** and a second portion **1392** extending from line of weakness **1388** to free edge **1368**. Line of weakness **1388** is configured to facilitate insertion of locking tabs **1370** and **1372** into locking slots **1310** and **1312**, respectively, to erect the container. In an alternative embodiment, second top side panel **1358** does not include line of weakness **1388**.

Further in the example embodiment, first top end panel **1354** includes a first stabilizing slot **1314** that forms a portion of top locking mechanism **1380**, and second top end panel **1362** includes a second stabilizing slot **1316** that forms a portion of top locking mechanism **1380**. Each stabilizing slot **1314** and **1316** is generally semi-ovoid-shaped, and second stabilizing slot **1316** is a mirror-image of first stabilizing slot **1314**.

Further in the example embodiment, first top side panel **1350** includes a free edge **1318** that defines a first stabilizing tab **1320** and a second stabilizing tab **1322**. Stabilizing tabs **1320** and **1322** form a portion of top locking mechanism **1380**. More specifically, stabilizing tab **1320** is configured to be received by stabilizing slot **1316** and stabilizing tab **1322** is configured to be received by stabilizing slot **1314** when the container (not shown) is erected. Free edge **1318** includes a first vertical portion **1323**, a first angled portion **1324**, a first horizontal portion **1326**, a first notch **1328**, a middle horizontal portion **1330**, a second notch **1332**, a second horizontal portion **1334**, a second angled portion **1336**, and a second vertical portion **1337**. First stabilizing tab **1320** is defined by first vertical portion **1323**, first angled portion **1324**, first horizontal portion **1326**, and first notch **1328**, and second stabilizing tab **1322** is defined by second notch **1332**, second horizontal portion **1334**, second angled portion **1336**, and second vertical portion **1337**. Alternatively, stabilizing tabs **1320** and/or **1322** and/or fire edge **1318** have any suitable configuration that enables blank **1300** to function as described herein. Further, in an alternative embodiment, middle horizontal portion **1330** includes a middle indent (not shown). In alternative embodiments, first top side panel **1350** further includes a line of weakness (not shown) similar to line of weakness **1388**.

Thus, in the example embodiment of FIG. **13**, top locking mechanism **1380** includes locking slots **1310** and **1312** and locking tabs **1370** and **1372**, as well as stabilizing slots **1314** and **1316** and stabilizing tabs **1320** and **1322**. Also, similar to blank **100**, at least one of the plurality of top panels **1350**, **1354**, **1358**, and **1362** includes at least one top corner portion **1396** that extends adjacent to a free top edge **1398** of a respective corner panel and/or glue panel, and each top corner portion **1396** is configured to at least partially form a top stacking platform of the container. A container (not shown) may be formed from blank **1300** in the same fashion as container **400** is formed from blank **100**, but including a top wall with locking mechanism **1380** formed in a similar fashion as bottom wall **442** of container **400**.

It should be understood that in alternative embodiments, any blank contemplated herein includes any suitable components and/or configuration of a top locking mechanism, such as any of top locking mechanism **1180**, **1280**, and **1380**, that enables a container as contemplated herein to be suitably formed. It also should be understood that in alternative embodiments, any blank contemplated herein includes any suitable components and/or configuration of a top locking mechanism, such as any of top locking mechanism **1180**, **1280**, and **1380**, that enables a container as contemplated herein to be suitably formed.

The above-described embodiments provide containers with top and bottom stacking platforms for shipping and/or storing products in a stacked configuration. Because the containers include top and bottom stacking platforms, a tendency of a bottom wall of an upper container to settle into, or "nest" within, a cavity defined by the sidewalls of the lower container is reduced or eliminated. The above-described embodiments also provide eight-sided containers constructed from blanks that include a plurality of side panels coupled together in series by preformed, generally parallel fold lines. Because at least one of the parallel fold lines is formed with an increased stiffness as compared to the others of the plurality of fold lines, a tendency for unintended rotation of the blank about the at least one fold line is reduced or eliminated. Thus, the blanks facilitate a formation of an eight-sided container in a knocked-down-flat configuration using a folder-gluer machine configured for four-sided containers, reducing or eliminating a need to modify or reconfigure the machine. Moreover, the above-described embodiments provide an optional insert for a reinforcing structure that increases a stacking strength of some such containers.

Exemplary embodiments of blanks and methods for forming containers are described above in detail. The apparatus and methods are not limited to the specific embodiments described herein, but rather, components of apparatus and/or steps of the methods may be utilized independently and separately from other components and/or steps described herein. For example, the methods may also be used in combination with other containers and methods, and are not limited to practice with only the containers and methods as described herein. Rather, the example embodiments can be implemented and utilized in connection with many other container applications.

Although specific features of various embodiments of the invention may be shown in some drawings and not in others, this is for convenience only. In accordance with the principles of the invention, any feature of a drawing may be referenced and/or claimed in combination with any feature of any other drawing.

This written description uses examples to illustrate the disclosure, including the best mode, and also to enable any person skilled in the art to practice the disclosure, including making and using any devices or systems and performing any incorporated methods. The patentable scope of the disclosure is defined by the claims, and may include other examples that occur to those skilled in the art. Such other examples are intended to be within the scope of the claims if they have structural elements that do not differ from the literal language of the claims, or if they include equivalent

structural elements with insubstantial differences from the literal language of the claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A blank of sheet material for forming a container, the blank comprising:

a plurality of side panels and a glue panel coupled together in series along generally parallel fold lines comprising a first fold line and a plurality of additional fold lines,

the plurality of side panels includes a plurality of corner panels,

wherein at least the first fold line has an increased stiffness as compared to the additional fold lines;

a plurality of bottom panels, each bottom panel extends from a bottom edge of a corresponding one of the plurality of side panels, at least one of the plurality of bottom panels includes at least one bottom corner portion that extends adjacent to and beneath a free bottom edge of a corresponding one of the corner panels; and

a plurality of top panels, each top panel extends from a top edge of a corresponding one of the plurality of side panels, at least one of the plurality of top panels includes at least one top corner portion that extends adjacent to and above a free top edge of a corresponding one of the corner panels.

2. The blank of sheet material in accordance with claim **1**, wherein each at least one top corner portion is configured to extend beyond a boundary defined by a plurality of sidewalls of the container to at least partially form a top stacking platform when the container is erected.

3. The blank of sheet material in accordance with claim **1**, wherein each at least one bottom corner portion is configured to extend beyond a boundary defined by a plurality of sidewalls of the container to at least partially form a bottom stacking platform when the container is erected.

4. The blank of sheet material in accordance with claim **1**, wherein the blank is rotatable about two of the additional fold lines to form a knocked-down-flat container, wherein the first fold line is other than the two additional fold lines.

5. The blank of sheet material in accordance with claim **1**, wherein the first fold line is preformed.

6. The blank of sheet material in accordance with claim **1**, wherein the first fold line is a perforation line, and each of the additional fold lines is a folding score.

7. The blank of sheet material in accordance with claim **1**, wherein the plurality of bottom panels further includes a bottom locking mechanism.

8. The blank of sheet material in accordance with claim **1**, wherein the plurality of top panels further includes a top locking mechanism.

9. The blank of sheet material in accordance with claim **1**, wherein the plurality of bottom panels includes four bottom panels, and the at least one bottom corner portion includes a first bottom corner portion and a second bottom corner portion of each of the four bottom panels.

10. The blank of sheet material in accordance with claim **1**, wherein the plurality of top panels includes four top panels, and the at least one top corner portion includes a first top corner portion and a second top corner portion of each of the four top panels.

11. The blank of sheet material in accordance with claim **1**, wherein at least two of the plurality of top panels are coupled together across a line of weakness.

12. The blank of sheet material in accordance with claim **11**, wherein the line of weakness is defined by at least one tab integrally formed across a segmented cut line.

13. The blank of sheet material in accordance with claim **11**, wherein one of the at least two of the plurality of top panels includes a fold line generally parallel to, and extending from, one of the plurality of additional fold lines.

14. A container formed from a blank of sheet material, wherein the blank includes a plurality of side panels and a glue panel coupled together in series along generally parallel fold lines comprising a first fold line and a plurality of additional fold lines, wherein at least the first fold line has an increased stiffness as compared to the additional fold lines, the container comprising:

a plurality of side walls that includes a plurality of corner walls, the plurality of side walls cooperate to define a boundary of the container;

a bottom wall that includes at least one bottom corner platform portion, each at least one bottom corner platform portion is disposed proximate a bottom edge of a respective one of the corner walls, each at least one bottom corner platform portion extends outside the boundary; and

a top wall that includes at least one top corner platform portion, each at least one top corner platform portion is disposed proximate a top edge of a respective one of the corner walls, each at least one top corner platform portion extends outside the boundary.

15. The container in accordance with claim **14**, wherein the bottom wall comprises a plurality of bottom panels of the blank coupled together by a bottom locking mechanism.

16. The container in accordance with claim **14**, wherein the top wall comprises a plurality of top panels of the blank coupled together by a top locking mechanism.

17. The container in accordance with claim **14**, wherein the at least one bottom corner platform portion includes four bottom corner platform portions, each of the four bottom corner platform portions is disposed proximate a bottom edge of a respective one of the plurality of corner walls.

18. The container in accordance with claim **14**, wherein the at least one top corner platform portion includes four top corner platform portions, each of the four top corner platform portions is disposed proximate a top edge of a respective one of the plurality of corner walls.

19. The container in accordance with claim **14**, wherein the plurality of side walls further includes a pair of opposing end walls, the container further comprising a pair of reinforcing end structures each formed from a reinforcing blank, each reinforcing end structure is positioned adjacent a respective one of the opposing end walls.

20. The container in accordance with claim **19**, wherein at least one of the reinforcing end structures is not secured to the respective one of the opposing end walls.

21. A method for forming a container from a blank of sheet material, wherein the blank includes a plurality of side panels and a glue panel coupled together in series along generally parallel fold lines comprising a first fold line and a plurality of additional fold lines, at least the first fold line has an increased stiffness as compared to the additional fold lines, the method comprising:

rotating the plurality of side panels about the generally parallel fold lines to form a plurality of side walls of the container, wherein the plurality of side walls includes a plurality of corner walls, the plurality of side walls cooperate to define a boundary of the container;

rotating a plurality of bottom panels of the blank to be substantially perpendicular to the plurality of side walls to form a bottom wall of the container, such that the bottom wall includes at least one bottom corner platform portion, each at least one bottom corner platform

portion is disposed proximate a bottom edge of a respective one of the corner walls, each at least one bottom corner platform portion extends outside the boundary; and

rotating a plurality of top panels of the blank to be substantially perpendicular to the plurality of side walls to form a top wall of the container, such that the top wall includes at least one top corner platform portion, each at least one top corner platform portion is disposed proximate a top edge of a respective one of the corner walls, each at least one top corner platform portion extends outside the boundary.

22. The method in accordance with claim **21**, wherein rotating the plurality of side panels comprises rotating the plurality of side panels about two of the additional fold lines to form a knocked-down-flat container, wherein the at first fold line is other than the two additional fold lines.

23. The method in accordance with claim **21**, further comprising coupling the plurality of bottom panels together using a bottom locking mechanism of the plurality of bottom panels.

24. The method in accordance with claim **21**, further comprising coupling the plurality of top panels together using a top locking mechanism of the plurality of top panels.

25. The method in accordance with claim **21**, wherein rotating the plurality of bottom panels of the blank to form the bottom wall further comprises rotating the plurality of bottom panels such that the at least one bottom corner platform portion includes four bottom corner platform portions, each of the four bottom corner platform portions is disposed proximate a bottom edge of a respective one of the plurality of corner walls.

26. The method in accordance with claim **21**, wherein rotating the plurality of top panels of the blank to form the top wall further comprises rotating the plurality of top panels such that the at least one top corner platform portion includes four top corner platform portions, each of the four top corner platform portions is disposed proximate a top edge of a respective one of the plurality of corner walls.

27. The method in accordance with claim **21**, wherein at least two of the plurality of top panels of the blank are coupled together across a line of weakness, the method further comprising separating the at least two of the plurality of top panels along the line of weakness.

28. The method in accordance with claim **21**, wherein the plurality of side walls further includes a pair of opposing end walls, the method further comprising: rotating a plurality of reinforcing panels of a reinforcing blank about a plurality of generally parallel fold lines of the reinforcing blank to form a reinforcing end structure; and positioning the reinforcing end structure adjacent a respective one of the opposing end walls.

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